

Two Varieties of Hong Kong English: Language Use in
Computer-mediated Communication Compared to Other
Forms of Written English among Hong Kong
Adolescents

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Abstract:

By examining the notion of Hong Kong English, and language use in computer-mediated communication, this dissertation aims at distinguishing two varieties of Hong Kong English; one variety being the Hong Kong English in computer-mediated communication (CMC); and the other being Hong Kong English in other written forms. Firstly, the forms of these two varieties are discussed. Then, using the data acquired from online interviews with 16 Hong Kong adolescents, their attitudes towards both Hong Kong English in CMC and other written forms of Hong Kong English are obtained. The social functions of these two varieties are also examined. By analysing the differences in form and function between these two varieties of Hong Kong English, this dissertation argues that CMC Hong Kong English should be distinguished as a variety from other forms of written Hong Kong English.

This is to certify that the dissertation comprises only my original work towards the MSc by Research, and due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other materials used.

Signed

Wing-kin Vinton Poon
August 2005

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1. Introduction

The sociolinguistics of the English language has always been a topic for debates and discussions in the field of linguistics. As more and more people speak English as a second language, the notion of varieties of English, and different Englishes start to emerge. Scholars discuss the forms, functions, and even political implications of these Englishes. Hong Kong, a city in which English plays an important role, has always been of particular interest among linguists who study language varieties. The notion of Hong Kong English has also been discussed among linguists.

As the popularity of internet communication grows, the use of language is given new space to develop. As people are exchanging information and communicating through the internet, the language, used by these people gains new forms, as well as new social functions. The Internet is a platform on which the forms of language change due to the negotiation of the internet users' identities and social power. It is believed that this new domain for new language use is having an impact on the English language in Hong Kong, helping the formation and growth of Hong Kong English.

The aim of this study is to explore the notion of Hong Kong English, and to distinguish two written varieties of Hong Kong Englishes according to their using situations, forms, and functions. It is believed that one variety of English is being developed on the internet. To approach this issue, this essay is divided into four main parts. In the first part, I present the background of this study – the sociolinguistics of Hong Kong, English in Hong Kong, and the notion of Hong Kong English. Then, in the second part, I discuss the language use on the internet – the domain in which the new form of Hong Kong English arises. My hypotheses of this study are also presented in this part. In the third part, the methodology of the research I have done is explained. Finally, the results and discussions of the collected data are presented in part four.

2. Hong Kong and Its Languages

2.1. Languages in Hong Kong

Hong Kong was a colony of Great Britain from 1841 until 1997. After the end of the colonial period, it became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of the People's Republic of China (PRC). The population of Hong Kong is quite homogeneous. Among the 7.5 million Hong Kong residents, more than 94% are Chinese (Hong Kong Government 2001). Almost all of these Chinese people speak Cantonese as their mother tongue, making this language the major language of the region.

Another important language in Hong Kong is English. Since the beginning of colonisation, English has been the language of government, education, and law. Although the use of Chinese has gradually become more prevalent in these fields, English continues to play an important role since the handover.

Luke and Richards (1984: 54) reported that, until 1974, English was the only language used for communication between the government and the people, and within the government itself. Since 1974, Chinese was formally recognised by the government as an official language, along with English. After the change of sovereignty, English remained an official language, used alongside Chinese. Although Chinese (both Cantonese and Mandarin) is gradually gaining more space in the government, English is still an important language in this domain. Evans and Green (2001) surveyed the language used in the public sector, and they found that English continued to function as the “unmarked language of internal and external written communication” (247).

Concerning the education system of Hong Kong¹, in both public examinations, Chinese and English are compulsory subjects. Failing either of them almost guarantees an unsuccessful application to university. English is the more important of the two language subjects, because the majority of the university departments weight rate English more highly than Chinese when considering applications. Each year, one

¹ In the education system of Hong Kong, the average child starts school at the age of 3, and goes through 3 years of kindergarten, 6 years of primary education, 5 years of secondary school, 2 years of pre-university education, and 3 years of tertiary education at a university, or institute of vocational education, obtaining an undergraduate degree, an associate degree, or a higher diploma. At the end of the secondary school, the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Exam (HKCEE) determines whether a student can proceed to the pre-university class, and prepare for the Hong Kong Advanced Level Exam (HKAL). The results of the two public examinations are the major references for admission to university.

can see a number of cases in which students who fail HKAL Chinese are still admitted to university, because of their outstanding performance in other subjects. However, none of the students who fail the English HKAL are admitted, even if they pass all other subjects with flying colours.

In the early colonial days, all legal procedures were conducted solely in English. It was only in the 1980s that simultaneous interpretation began to be fully provided for. The situation changed gradually through time. The first court proceeding that used the Chinese language exclusively was reported in the press in December 1995 (Cheung 1997: 63). English was also the controlling language in for legislation until 1987, at which point both Chinese and English documents became “equally authentic” (Joseph 2000: 20). Although after the change of sovereignty Chinese became the controlling language, English remained the prevalent language in the legal field.

2.2. Functions of English in Hong Kong

The importance of English, however, is not only shown by its use in the above domains. Its various functions also contribute to its status in the region. First of all, *English is a tool for attaining social success*. The economy of Hong Kong largely depends on import and export, tourism, and financial services. All of these fields are outward stretching. Therefore, English, the global language, is one of the major factors that determines the success of a business. For this reason, many firms and companies that deal with other countries need staff members who speak fluent English, especially those who are in high positions. The better English one can speak, the better the chance one has of obtaining a good job, a good career and of climbing the social ladder. Driven by this economic force, English has become the key to social success in Hong Kong.

Secondly, *English is a form of cultural capital² in Hong Kong*. In the theory of Boudieu, linguistic capital is seen as a kind of cultural capital. When one can speak certain languages (or certain forms of a language) legitimised by society, he/she possesses linguistic capital. These “certain languages” are usually the national

² The concept of cultural capital is proposed by the sociologist Pierre Boudieu. According to Boudieu, economic capital is not the only factor that determines one’s social class. Three other forms of capital, namely, cultural social and symbolic capital, also play a role in deciding his/her social class. Economic capital is a person’s wealth; cultural capital relates to different kinds of useful knowledge, usually acquired through educated; social capital includes a person’s social network and relationships to other people; and symbolic capital has to do with one’s prestige and honour, which are more intangible in nature. These different forms of capital are interchangeable. For example, one’s knowledge in law (i.e. cultural capital, can help one gain a job as a lawyer, earning a high salary (i.e. economic capital) (Bourdieu 1986).

language of a country, or the languages of the (ex)-colonisers. Linguistic capital, like cultural capital, can be converted into other forms of capital. For example, in the early colonial days of Sri Lanka, the ability to speak English fluently meant a native Sri Lankan could use this skill to get a well-paid job in the government (Canagarajah 2000). The English language, in this case, was linguistic capital, and possessing it permitted a person to gain economic capital.

Chan (2002) said that English has become linguistic capital in Hong Kong. She wrote that students and parents “regard[ed] the English language as cultural capital, which [could] later be converted into economic capital”. As mentioned above, in Hong Kong, the more fluent his/her ability to speak English, the higher the social ladder he/she can climb. Thus, it is understandable that students and parents have such viewpoint.

Thirdly, *English is a linguistic habitus of Hong Kong*³. In the fields of business, law and education, people claim that English has become a characteristic of Hong Kong. This characteristic, according to the people, is essential to the society. They worry that a drop in the standard of English will harm Hong Kong as a commercial and international city, which has a well established administrative and law system. Through these observations, Chan (2002) concludes that “the English language has become a habitus of the community” (281).

2.3. English and Hong Kong Identity

Finally, *English is an identity marker of the Hong Kong People*. It is widely consented that language and national identity are intimately related. Often people are criticised for not being genuinely from a country, because they speak the language with a foreign accent, or are unable to speak it at all. Joseph (2004: 98-125) examined the work of different scholars, and discussed how these scholars approached the relationship between nations and their standard languages in various ways. One consensus amongst them was the fact that they all acknowledged the strong bond between a nation and its standard language(s).

³ The notion of habitus is also proposed by Bourdieu. Habitus is a set of dispositions which make individuals inclined to act and react in certain ways. These dispositions give rise to practices, perceptions and attitudes that are not regulated by any rule or law recognised by the individuals (Thompson 1991:12). According to Bourdieu, in a linguistic market – which is an agreed notion of what can be said and what should be censored – a language used by a privileged few is promoted to the status of standard languages, through the education system, whilst the use of other languages and dialects are discouraged. The education system also functions to maintain the legitimised language. The legitimisation and the maintenance of the standard language gradually constitute the formation of a linguistic habitus (Chan 2001, Bourdieu 1991).

Brewer (1999) said that the identities of the Hong Kong people have been in transition since the 1980s. In establishing her model, she wrote that, in Hong Kong, people were negotiating between the two identities – being “Chinese”, the more inclusive ethnic identity, and being “Hong Konger”, the more exclusive regional identity. Tong et al. (1999: 292) further developed the point. They said that the language choice of a person in conversation mostly depended on whether he or she regarded him or herself as being more “Chinese” or “Hong Konger”.

As mentioned above, more than 95% of the population in Hong Kong is ethnically Chinese. Many of them speak Cantonese as their first language. From this, it is possible to suggest that Cantonese is an identity marker of being “Hong Konger”. Putonghua – the national language of the PRC, which is the country to which Hong Kong belongs – is an important identity marker of being “Chinese”.

English, alongside Cantonese and Putonghua, marks the identity of the Hong Kong People. Lai (2001) surveyed 134 senior secondary school students, and found that they agreed to the notion “English is part of my life” (124). In examining the social discourses concerning the medium of instruction in Hong Kong, Chan (2002) also suggested that insofar as English was a habitus of the people in Hong Kong, it had become “part and parcel of the Hong Kong identity” (281).

The notion, however, was not unchallenged. Studying the language use in different domains in Hong Kong, Johnson (1994) pointed out that English was merely used instrumentally in the society, and there was “no social or cultural roles for English to play among Hong Kong Chinese” (182). The function of the language, he argued, was to communicate with expatriates and the outside world. English did not seem to have any social or cultural function in the community, since the language was rarely used in conversation between Hong Kong Chinese. In her analysis of students’ attitudes to the learning of English, Lai (1999) also said that English was for instrumental use (280).

Hyland (1997) surveyed the language attitudes of university students in Hong Kong. He found that it was the instrumental value that motivated students to learn English. This was because English gave no social benefits for its users, and the Hong Kong People were not aspired by English “to embrace Western culture and its value” (207).

Yang and Lau (2003) had a similar stance: “the need for high standard of English is invariably an economic one” (109). This implied that English was merely for

instrumental use, and it had no social roles to play. The interesting point here was that Yang and Lau used the term “high standards of English”. This left a space for the discussion about the social roles of low standards or non-standard English in Hong Kong.

The English language spoken by the Hong Kong People is different from standard varieties, both phonetically and syntactically. This “below-standard” English is known by the Hong Kong People themselves as “Chinglish”, “Pidgin English”, or simply “bad English”. In the following section, this variety of English will be discussed. It is hoped that by exploring the notion of Hong Kong English, we can see if this variety is performing any social function, more particularly, if it is marking the identity of the Hong Kong People.

2.4. Hong Kong English

The notion of Hong Kong English has been a topic for discussion since the beginning of the 1980s. In the analysis of the functions and status of English in Hong Kong, Luke and Richards (1982) maintained that Hong Kong English did not exist, because there was “no societal basis for ‘indigenization’ or ‘nativization’ of English in Hong Kong” (55). Firstly, the grammaticality of English in Hong Kong was still following the rules of British and American English, instead of their own rules. Secondly, as English was rarely used by Hong Kong Chinese to communicate with each other, there was “neither the societal need nor opportunity for the development of a stable Cantonee variety of spoken English” (55). Li (1999) also argued against the existence of Hong Kong English for similar reasons. He pointed out that there was “no societal basis for a nativized variety of “Hong Kong English”” (95).⁴

Bolton (2002), however, argued for the existence of Hong Kong English. According to Bolton, the reasons for the non-existence of Hong Kong English were “myths” (41-47). He used Butler’s (1997) model to support his stance. In the model, a variety of English has to have (1) a distinctive accent; (2) a culturally specific set of words and phrases; (3) a history which shows that English has been in the community for a long time; (4) a literature written with no apology in that variety of English’; and

⁴ Although they did not think that there was a distinct variety in Hong Kong, they were not unaware of the fact that the English language spoken by the Hong Kong People was not the same as the standard varieties. To account for this, Luke and Richard (1982) proposed the notion of “cline of proficiency”. In this cline, “the proficiency of individual speakers may range from minimal to native-like,” depending on the speakers’ education and social background (56). According to Luke and Richards, the difference between the speakers in the cline was idiosyncratic. This suggested that there is no specific pattern of speaking English among the speakers of Hong Kong.

finally (5) reference works like dictionaries and style guides. Bolton (2002) showed that Hong Kong English fulfilled all the criteria mentioned above. He, thus, concluded that Hong Kong English existed as a distinct variety.

Joseph (2004) also said that Hong Kong English existed. He, however, approached it in a different way. He was aware of the public opinions on the decline of the English standard among the people in Hong Kong. He, then, examined the notion of Hong Kong English, in which people claimed that this variety of English had its own specific pattern and features. Noticing that the “errors” Hong Kong People made had a certain pattern, and that the pattern was to a large extent the same as the features of Hong Kong English, he argued that “the ‘emergence of Hong Kong English’ and ‘the decline of English standards in Hong Kong’ are *one and the same thing*, looked at from two different points of view” (147).

Schneider (2003) suggested a model to explain the developmental process of a variety of English. The five stages were (1) foundation, (2) exonormative stabilization, (3) nativisation, (4) endonormative stabilization, and (5) differentiation. He said that Hong Kong was at stage 3 of the process. At this stage, language use became a practical issue, and it was used to express new identities. One could also see “the transition from acceptance of a distant mother country as the source of both practical power and linguistic and cultural guidance to gradual independence” (247). Schneider noticed, on the one hand, people’s lamentation over the decline of the English language among the student population of Hong Kong, and, on the other hand, the discussions of the notion of Hong Kong English among the scholars. He, thus, argued that English in Hong Kong was undergoing nativisation.

Although the above scholars have different points of view and approaches to understand the English spoken by the Hong Kong People, they all agree that the English spoken in Hong Kong is different from English spoken elsewhere. Both Luke and Richards (1984) and Li (1999) acknowledge that English spoken by the Hong Kong People has certain phonological features. Luke and Richards (1984: 58-61) lay out the typical features of a ‘mid-proficiency’ speaker of English in Hong Kong, and Li (1999) says that “Chinese Hongkongers, including highly educated speakers bilingual in Cantonese and English, tend to speak with a marked “Hong Kong accent”” (100). However, neither of them believes that Hong Kong English exists, the major reason being that there is no societal function for such a variety. They argue that as English is not used in intra-ethnic communication in the society, Hong Kong English does not have a ground on which it can develop. Moreover, the norms of

English in Hong Kong are still “exonormative”, which means the norms of correctness follow the ones of British and American.

Concerning the exonormative nature of English in Hong Kong, Bolton (2002: 48-49) notes that several reference works are being produced. According to Bolton, the Macquarie Dictionary Company will publish a dictionary of Hong Kong English in the near future. A database of around one million words of English in Hong Kong will also be set up as a part of the International Corpus of English. Although these references may not immediately change the norms of English in Hong Kong from “exonormative” to “endonormative”, the fact that the form, patterns and features of Hong Kong English are documented as a variety instead of “wrong English usage” shows the first step to the recognition of Hong Kong English.

Regarding the use of English for intra-ethnic communication in Hong Kong, Bolton (2002) says that English, especially in written forms, is actually used in intra-ethnic communication. To support his points, he cites the data obtained by Bacon-Shone & Bolton in 1993. The data shows that English has infiltrated into the society of Hong Kong in various ways. The use of English among Hong Kong Chinese is not at all rare (Bolton 2002, 42-43). The statistics in the work of Evans & Green (2003) also show that English is prevalent in written communication between Hong Kong Chinese in both the public and private sectors. According to the authors, although spoken English is used less frequently, it is by no means unimportant.

It is shown that English is used for intra-ethnic communication, nonetheless, it does not mean that English has societal functions. However, the fact that English is being used in intra-ethnic communication provides a space in which Hong Kong English can be developed. Adding to the facts that English has a long history in the society, and that English in Hong Kong has distinctive patterns and features (Hung 2002 – phonology; Bolton 2002 & Benson 2002 – morphology; Gisborne 2002 & Joseph 2004 – syntax), it can be concluded that Hong Kong English exists as a variety. As Joseph (2004) and Schneider (2003) have mentioned, Hong Kong English is still emerging and being nativised. Nevertheless, it exists as a variety of English.

Bolton (2002) furthers this point by saying that Hong Kong English is gaining new space for intra-ethnic communication. In cyber space, Hong Kong English is able to develop, in both forms and functions. He says that the Hong Kong People, especially the teenagers, “bubble up” a code-mixed and hybrid variety of English in their online conversation through chat machines like ICQ. To study the interactions between Hong

Kong English and the internet, I will discuss the nature and features of language in computer-mediated communication (CMC); the way in which people, from around the world and Hong Kong, use language on the internet, and the impact of this form of communication on Hong Kong English.

3. Computer-mediated Communication and Hong Kong English

The invention of the internet has brought radical changes to the lives of individuals, as well as society. Through the internet, people can retrieve information they cannot otherwise access. Communication between people from different parts of the world is also much easier and quicker. Because of the internet, the structures of how information is exchanged have changed, the forms of communication have changed, the ways in which people use language have changed, and, more importantly, the language patterns have changed.

3.1. Netspeak

In his discussion of language use on the internet, Crystal (2001: 10-14) distinguishes five “internet-using situations” on the internet. They are 1) electronic mail, 2) synchronous chatgroups, 3) asynchronous chatgroups, 4) virtual worlds, and 5) world wide web. The language use in each of these 5 groups has its own unique features. However, it does not mean that they are totally different. Crystal names the use of language on the internet “netspeak”, and he describes it as “something genuinely different in kind – ‘speech + writing + electronically mediated properties’” (48).

Netspeak indeed has features of both written and spoken language. Although the sentences and texts are typed into the computer and read (instead of heard) by the person at the receiving end, the spoken features in these sentences are obvious and abundant compared to other written forms. For instance, in synchronous chatgroups (e.g. Internet relay chat (IRC)), as conversations are time bound and spontaneous, sentences in these interactions are quite loosely structured. These spoken features can also be seen in virtual worlds (e.g. Multi-users Dungeons – MUDs). However, the amount of spoken features depends on the internet-using situations. Generally, the language on the Web has the least spoken features, while the language on chatgroups and virtual worlds has the most. Emails are in between the two ends of the scale (Crystal: 42).

Another important property of netspeak is that it is bound by the computer. As sentences are typed onto the screen, the texts on the internet lose a large amount of personal cues an author may want to convey. For instance, in a chatroom, even though people are said to be “chatting” and “having conversations” with each other, by just typing and reading the texts on the server, participants’ emotions, tones, voice qualities, and other personal cues are not detectable. Because of the media through

which this communication is carried out, computer-mediated communication (CMC) is a unique form of communication, having both spoken and written features, and electronically mediated properties.

As mentioned, netspeak is different depending on the kind of internet-using situation. Crystal (2001) has given a detailed account of the differences and properties of various computer-mediated communications (CMCs). For the purpose of this study, I will focus on the language and communication of synchronic chatgroups, especially chat programmes that are designed for one-to-one conversations, for example, MSN Messenger, and ICQ (I-see –you).

3.2. Synchronous Chatgroups

In a synchronous chatgroup, “a user enters a chat room and joins an ongoing conversation in real time, sending named contributions which are inserted into a permanently scrolling screen along with the contributions from other participants” (Crystal 2001: 11). It can be seen that these chatgroups simulate face-to-face conversations. Although speakers are not really facing each other, and they cannot listen to the other speakers, the fact that their communication is made through conversation makes it resemble face-to-face conversations. For instance, with an IRC client, a user can see the current conversation between the different people while a small section on the right hand side shows a list of the current members. The user can then participate by typing their own text into a section at the bottom of the window and pressing enter to add it to the main conversation for everyone else to see.



Fig.1. Opera – an IRC client.

Another kind of synchronous chatgroups are Instant messengers. Different from IRC, Instant messengers are usually for one to one online conversations. MSN messenger and ICQ are two of the most popular instant messengers. When one is engaged in a conversation with another person on instant messengers, one can see a window divided into two parts. The top half is a box, in which sentences typed by both sides are seen. The sentences are in chronological order, with the earlier sentences on top and later sentences added below. The bottom half is another box, into which the user types their “utterances”. When one has finished typing what he/she wants to say, one presses enter and the sentence will be sent to the top box. So conversation turns can be seen in that box.

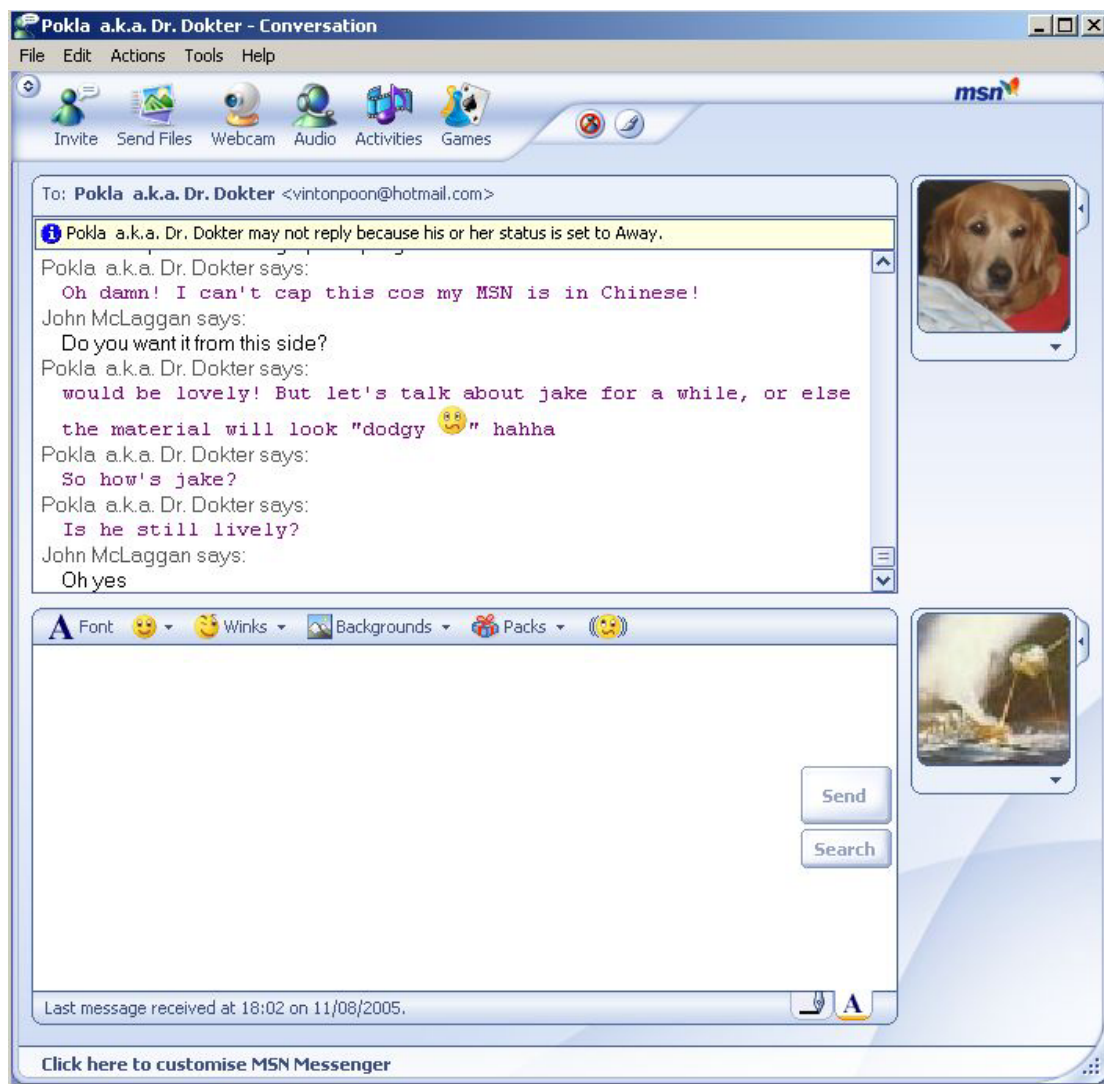


Fig.2. MSN Messenger

Principally, this kind of conversation on the internet is very similar to face-to-face conversation, in which speakers take turns to contribute. Also, the typed out sentences are syntactically more like spoken sentences in general. They are usually more informal, and participants are less aware of using the correct spellings. This is because the major purpose in a synchronous chatgroup is to have a “chat”, and chatting does not usually require formal language. Therefore, users tend to type how they speak, instead of how they write, making the sentences more speech-like.

However, unlike face-to-face conversations, synchronous chatgroup conversations have no overlappings and interruptions, because conversations in synchronous chatgroups are not exactly real-time. The receivers are not able to see the turn until the senders send the typed texts. Alternatively, in face-to-face conversations, a hearer starts listening to a sentence whilst it is being spoken, so overlapping and

interruptions are possible (Nofsinger 1991: 101).

One unique feature of synchronous chatgroup conversation is language play. Danet et. al (1997) analyse a “virtual party” on IRC, in which participants simulated the action of smoking marihuana. It is found that participants play with their identities, frames of interaction, as well as typographic symbols. From the observations, the authors argue that “digital writing is inherently playful”, because “the absence of non-verbal and other social or material cues to identity frees participants to be other than “themselves”, or more of themselves than they normally express”. Herring (1999) says that this playful nature is one of the reasons why chatgroups are popular.⁵

3.3. Chatgroups and Identity

When one enters a chatgroup, he/she creates a nickname, which will be the only personal cue for the chat session. Other personal information, for instance, age, gender and place of origin, are not immediately apparent. Sometimes in asynchronous chatgroups, one is asked to provide one’s personal information, but there is virtually no consequence if one lies about it. One can, of course, provide this information to other users during conversation, but lying and creating a false identity is not at all difficult. So, a 45 year-old man who comes from New York can convince other users to believe he is an 18 year-old woman coming from London, as long as he uses his language judiciously.⁶

Besides the above identity information (e.g. nicknames and language use), other cues to personal identities (e.g. voice quality, tone, accent and etc.) and emotions that allow an individual to be distinguishable are also lacking. Without these elements, constructing an identity is more difficult.

So, it can be seen that, the lack of identity cues, on the one hand, opens the door to freely constructing identities, but, on the other hand, makes this construction of

⁵ It is noted that language play can also happen in face-to-face conversation. However, as Danet et. al (1997) mention, personal information, for example, one’s gender and age group, are attached to the speakers during conversations. This information restrains participants from being people other than themselves. As a result, speakers are involved less in language play. Also, in face-to-face conversation, there is less to “play with”. Unlike synchronous chatgroups conversations, speaker in face-to-face conversations cannot play with, for instance, typographic symbols. Playing with identities in face-to-face conversation is possible, but it involves much more effort and cost. Therefore, language play happens less in face-to-face conversations.

⁶ In fact, one does not even need sophisticated skills to construct a fictitious identity. Herring (1999) illustrates a case, in which a robot programme named Julia fools a male IRC user over a period of several weeks into thinking that the programme is a female human. This shows that it is not at all difficult for participants of online chats to create identities for themselves.

identities more difficult. To compensate for the lack of elements used for identity construction, internet users make use of the limited resource (e.g. words of different fonts, and a variety of digital graphics) to convey the person cues, making the construction of identities easier.

Online chatters have developed a convention to convey their personal identities cues. For instance, words and sentences written with capital letters are stressed (example 1), phrases between two asterisks are “actions” (example 2), and there are smileys for telling others one’s emotions (example 3).

Example 1: A: who r u talking to?
B: I AM TALKING TO YOU!!

Example 2: A: brill let’s go shopping tomorrow then
B: yay! *sing and dance*

Example 3: A: u sure you don’t wanna go?
B: yup
A: oh no :-(⁷

Besides the use of fonts, capitalisations, and smileys, online chatters also make use of other resources to convey their internet identities. Firstly, like in social interaction in the offline world, online chatters use their names to tell people who they are. Bechar-Israeli (1995) studied the use of nicknames among participants in an IRC chat room. She found that nicknames in the chat room were created to reflect self identities.

Secondly, similar to the offline world, language style is also used to reflect internet identity. Paolillo (1999) observed the linguistic behaviour of an online chatgroup. He found that “[d]ifferent vernacularizing linguistic variables may instead be localized in different areas of a social network”. This also means that, within a social group, people tend to use jargon and unique expressions to mark their group identities.

Cassell & Tversky (2005) studied the online linguistic behaviour of 3,062 teenagers from 139 countries. These teenagers were put together in an online forum for 3

⁷ With the advancement of technology, smileys are now usually represented by graphics. The little yellow face in Fig.2 is a “confused” smiley (they are also called emoticons) on MSN Messenger. Users can also now personalise their smileys by installing their own graphics on the programme. So emotions can be more effectively expressed.

months. Results showed that during the period, the participants influenced each other's language use, and their writing styles became more similar to each other. This supports the notion that people use their language to show their collective identities.

It is noted that internet identity is not constructed solely by the speaker himself/herself. The language of other participants in the interaction is also very important for identity construction. Baker (2001) investigated and analysed a 'moral panic' issue that took place in an online forum. He observed that a user who presented himself as homophobic could not have successfully constructed his identity without other users' criticisms of his behaviour. He therefore concluded that identity is constructed by the collaborated efforts of both the speakers/writers and the hearer/readers.

For bilingual internet users, language mixing is an effective strategy to mark their social identities. After studying the language use of Egyptian young professionals on the internet, Warschauer et. al (2002) found that, while English was the dominating language of formal emails, these internet users tended to use mixing of English and Egyptian Arabic in informal emails and online chats. The mix of the two languages, according to the authors, was to show the internet users' "globalness" (i.e. being international by the use of English) and "localness" (i.e. being Egyptian by the use of Egyptian Arabic).

Warschauer et. al (2002) also reported the use of a romanised version of Egyptian Arabic on the internet. The authors believed that this hybrid language is also a product of the dynamic of global and local culture.

According to Hongdarom (2000), the internet not only functions to homogenise cultures, it also allows people to promote and maintain their local culture. The internet provides a platform on which people negotiate their identities between global and local culture. As English is the default language on the internet, the use of English represents the global culture (Cumming 1995: 4). After observing the language use in a Swiss mailing list, Durham (2003) claimed that 'English has become the lingua franca, the preferred language of intra-Swiss communication'. Therefore, in the "globalness" side of the dynamics, one can usually see the English language being the linguistic representative.

The dynamics between being global and being local lead to the creation of hybrid languages, like the romanised version of Egyptian Arabic mentioned above.

The results of these dynamics on the internet can also be seen in other cultures. Su (2003) reported three creative uses of the Chinese writing system. They were stylised English, stylised Taiwanese-accented Mandarin, and stylised Taiwanese. All of these creative uses involve linguistic hybridity. Furthermore, Koutsogiannis & Mitsikopoulou (2003) discussed the social implications of “Greeklish”. “Greeklish” was a writer method in which writers used the Latin alphabet to replace the Greek alphabet on the computer. This “Greeklish” is another form of hybridity on the internet.

3.4. Hong Kong English and the Internet

As Bolton (2002) mentions, ICQ provides a space for youngsters in Hong Kong to express their linguistic creativity, particularly in Hong Kong English. He cites an online chat session between two university students (49-51). In this session, both sides show marked features of Hong Kong English on the internet. These include the following:

- 1) Romanised Cantonese: Cantonese expressions are phonologically translated into romanised forms. For instance, *Mo Liu* (Cantonese – *mou4 liu4*⁸, ‘nonsense’).
- 2) Literal translation of Cantonese to English: Each morpheme in a Chinese expression is translated into English. For instance, *five time flower six time change* (Cantonese – *ng3 si4 faa1 luk6 si4 bin3* [you like flower at 5 o’clock, but you’ve changed your mind by six] ‘you’re always changing your mind’)
- 3) End of sentence particles, in romanised form: for instance “no *ah*, I want presents *ah!!!*”.

James (2001) also reports that end of sentence particles have become a phenomenon of Hong Kong student’s English emails. He argues that Cantonese particles are used to express sentence intonation (11).

Besides expressing sentence intonation, I believe that end of sentence particles, as well as the above two features, are also the product of the negotiation between “globalness” and “localness”. English, being the default language on the internet, is widely used by internet users around the world, including Hong Kong. However, the

⁸ The phonetic transcription used here is *Jyutping*, in which the numbers represent the tone values. 1 – high level, 2 – mid rising, 3 – mid level, 4 – low falling, 5 – low rising, 6 – low level, 7 – short high level, 8 – short mid level, 9 – short low level.

fact that English is also representing the global culture makes these users reluctant to accept the language as it comes. Therefore, they make use of the above features to assert their localness – to mark the Hong Kong Identity. As a result, one can see such hybrid variety on the internet.

One cannot see these features in other forms of written English. I believe it is mainly due to two reasons. Firstly, written English in Hong Kong is usually used for more formal communication, such as business letters, essays for schoolwork, and newspaper articles. In these occasions, personal features in the language are discouraged. Thus, the above “online features” are not seen. Secondly, “online feature” involves language play. Online chatters play with language, and “bubble-up” this form of English with Hong Kong features in chat rooms. As mentioned, language play is a special feature of chatgroup communication. One can therefore see these features appearing in online chat rooms or forums, but rarely elsewhere.

3.5. Hypotheses

Based on the above observations, I would like to argue that 1) there are two varieties of written Hong Kong Englishes – Hong Kong English in CMC, and Hong Kong English in other written forms, 2) Hong Kong English in CMC has linguistic features that other forms of written Hong Kong English does not possess; and 3) Hong Kong English in CMC has a social function that other written forms of Hong Kong English does not. This function is to mark Hong Kong Identity.

To distinguish a variety from other varieties, one has to distinguish both the forms and functions of this variety from the others⁹. Thus, to support the first hypothesis, I first would have to support hypothesis two and three.

3.6. Hong Kong English Features

Gisborne (2002) discusses the syntactic features of Hong Kong English. He focuses on the relative clauses produced by Hong Kong English speakers. He has found that, while the syntax of Hong Kong English has features that are shared with other Asian varieties of English, Hong Kong English has certain unique features, for instance, the use of “where” with an abstract head noun (example 4), and the use of a relative marker in a reduced relative clause (example 5):

⁹ Kloss (1967), in his proposal, claimed that, when distinguishing two varieties of language, one should consider both their formal differences (abstandsprache) and differences in social functions (ausbausprache).

(Example 4) This is the basis **where** we can go on. (Gisborne 2002: 148)

(Example 5) This is the student **who** admitted last year. (Gisborne 2002: 146)

Hong Kong English also has features that are shared with other varieties of English. Joseph (2004), in his analysis of Hong Kong English, points out that Hong Kong English speakers tend to blur the syntactic difference between count nouns and mass nouns (example 6 & 7).

Example 6 ... their **price** are very similar, from about \$1400 to \$3700.

Example 7 The low status of the African-Americans that analysed in the above text has been the background of **the fiction** <The Women of Brewster Place>.

The use of particles (Example 8) and articles (Example 9) is also a marked feature of Hong Kong English.

Example 8 Beside they seek **for** employees who possess the service willingness.

Example 9 music were also a popular culture among **the** blacks in the 60s.

One can see the above features in all forms of written Hong Kong English, including those in CMC. Nevertheless, the features of Hong Kong CMC (discussed in section 3.4.), are rarely, if not never, found in other forms of written forms of English.

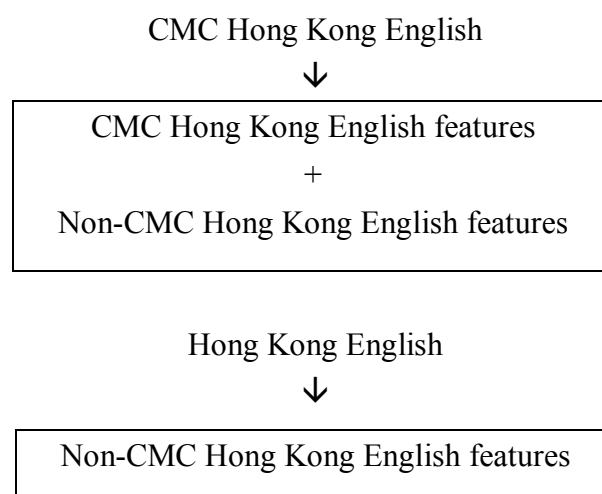


Fig. 3. CMC Hong Kong English and Hong Kong English.

It is important to understand that, even though in this research “CMC Hong Kong English” is compared to “written Hong Kong English”, it does not make CMC Hong Kong English any less “written” than other forms of written Hong Kong English. One may like to argue that the difference between written Hong Kong English and CMC Hong Kong English is due to the fact that the former is written while the latter is “spoken” because it is used for online conversations. It is undeniable that CMC Hong Kong English contains many spoken features. Nonetheless, no matter how “spoken-like” CMC Hong Kong English is, the fact that it is *typed into* the internet chat rooms, and it is *read* by the receiving end makes it written, instead of spoken, language.

To test my third hypothesis, which says CMC Hong Kong English performs an identity marking function compared to written Hong Kong English, I have conducted some interviews to investigate attitudes towards CMC Hong Kong English and normal written Hong Kong English.

4. Methodology

To test my third hypothesis, which says CMC Hong Kong English performs an identity marking function compared to written Hong Kong English, I conducted 16 interviews in July 2005 to investigate the attitudes towards CMC Hong Kong English and normal written Hong Kong English.

4.1. Informants

16 informants were chosen to be interviewed. These informants were all young people in between the age of 18 to 24, and they were all locally educated in Hong Kong. This age group was chosen because, in Hong Kong, the people in this group spent significantly more time on online chat or discussions than other age groups (Zhu & He 2002). Moreover, in the society, this group of people was believed to be the most “internet literate”, because they were still high school or university students when they were introduced to the internet, and they could afford to spend more time after school exploring the then new technology. This also helped them in setting up a social network through the online chat systems. It is, therefore, reasonable to say that people in this age group are most familiar with the internet culture, and online chat practices.

These informants were approached through the writers’ own social network. The writer has an MSN Messenger account, and the informants were either the writer’s online friends on the messenger friend list, or friends or relatives introduced by the online friends. All of them owned an MSN Messenger account, and were familiar with online chatting. Below is a list of the informants. Their gender, age and education level were given in the table.

INFORMANT	GENDER	AGE	EDUCATION LEVEL
A	M	23	University degree graduate
B	M	19	Secondary form 7 student
C	M	22	University degree graduate
D	M	20	Associate degree student
E	M	20	Higher Diploma student
F	M	20	Associate degree student
G	M	19	Secondary form 7 student
H	M	24	Postgraduate student
I	F	18	Secondary form 6 student
J	F	22	University degree student

K	F	19	University degree student
L	F	19	University degree student
M	F	21	University degree student
N	F	24	Postgraduate student
O	F	20	Associate degree student
P	F	21	University degree student

Table 1. Details of the informants.

8 males (mean age = 20.9) and 8 females (mean age = 20.5) participated in the study. Except for three of the informants, who were attending pre-university education (i.e. secondary form 6 and form 7), all of them were receiving, or had received, tertiary education (i.e. high diploma, associate degree, university degree, and postgraduate).¹⁰

4.2. The Interviews

The interviews were conducted through MSN Messenger (no. of informants = 8) and ICQ (no. of informants = 8), and each of them lasted for about 30 to 90 minutes, depending on the typing speed of the informants, the time they took for reading the texts, and the length of time between each message was sent. Instant Messengers (IM) were chosen for several reasons, the first of which being that conversation through IM was relatively easy to log. The chat log would also be more accurate than transcribed telephone conversations. Secondly, as mentioned above, before sending the messages, senders could still repair their online conversation turns before the sentences were read by the receivers. This nature of online chat allowed informants to think more carefully before answering the questions. Thirdly, using instant messengers made quoting easier. As the interview needed the informants to read several short passages, it would be easier for the informants to quote from the passages when they needed to, because the copy and paste functions of the computer made it more convenient for the informants to quote from the passages, which were sent as an MS Word document to their computer.

However, one big shortcoming of using IMs was that, unlike telephone interviews and face-to-face interviews, the interviewers had a lot less information to verify the

¹⁰ It is noted that all of the informants were educated in EMI (English as a medium of instruction) secondary schools. In the educated system of Hong Kong, students either went to an EMI or CMI (Chinese medium of instruction) secondary school. Although it was believed that the difference between EMI and CMI education would not cause differences in attitudes, the difference between these educational backgrounds should still be included as a fixed variable. Initially CMC students of this age group were searched for. However, after assiduous effort was paid, no CMI students could be found, and this was considered a limitation of the study.

identities of the interviewees. So interviewees might lie to the interviews about their gender, age and education level. Moreover, the length of time between each conversation turn could be quite long (e.g. 5 minutes), which might make the interview too long. The informants might therefore lose patience and give hazy answers.

Concerning the identities of the informants, it is believed that the informants did not lie to the interviewers, because they were either the interviewer's friend, or those friends' friends or relatives. So the chance that they lied to the interviewer about their identities was slender.

4.2.1 The Passages for the Interviews

To each informant, I sent a document that contained four short passages (presented in appendix A). The first two passages (P1 and P2) were extracts of online conversations (through MSN Messenger) between two pairs of friends. P1 was a conversation between two 17-year-old females. One of them was in Hong Kong studying in secondary school form 6, and the other one was in the UK, studying in secondary 5. P2 was also an MSN Messenger conversation, made by two 24-year-old males. One of them was a postgraduate student studying in the UK, and the other one was working in Hong Kong. Both of them were very good friends.

Passage 3 and 4 (P3 and P4) were extracts from two academic essays written by two students. P3 was written by a 23-year-old male university student for a third year business course. He was reading Business Studies in the City University of Hong Kong at the time the essay was written. P4 was a small part of a 22-year-old male student's undergraduate dissertation. He had been studying in the UK since he was 13, and, at the time this passage was written, he was studying Sports Science at Harington-Watt University in Edinburgh. All of the writers mentioned above were Hong Kong People.

It can be seen that, P1 and P2 contain both CMC Hong Kong English features and written Hong Kong English features, while P3 and P4 only contain written Hong Kong English features. Between P1 and P2, P1 has more marked CMC Hong Kong English features, for instance, romanised Cantonese – “*wa.. gum mei ho leng law*”¹¹,

¹¹ ‘*wa.. gum mei ho leng law*’: ‘哇..咁咪好靚囉’ – pronounced as: *waa3 gum2 mai6 hou2 leng3 lo1*, which means ‘Wow... then it should be very beautiful!’.

literal translations from Cantonese to English – “u like ar¹²”, the mixture of the two – “u wait jor gum long jui hai yiu hair cut ar????¹³”, and Cantonese end of sentence particles – *ar* in “wt do you want ar”. One can also see that, in the passage, there are also certain marked CMC features, like the use of capital letters and symbols to convey stress (e.g. “waRRRRR~~~~~*****”), and short forms of words or phrases (e.g. “bd” for birthday, “u” for you, and “yr” for year).

P2, compared to P1, has less CMC Hong Kong English features. However, it is still quite markedly Hong Kong because of the literal translation of Cantonese to English (e.g. “Cos dunno ma!!¹⁴”) and Cantonese end of sentence particles (e.g. *la*¹⁵ in “Oh haha I’ve just woken up la”, *bor*¹⁶ in “Oh but it’s not good to leave everything down bor”). It is also noted that P2 has some general CMC features, for example, short forms (e.g. “noth” for nothing, “dunno” for don’t know, and “hv” for have), and use of smileys.

Also, the fact P1 and P2 was written in turns between speaker A and speaker B indicated that they were conversations. The informants, however, were not given any extra information apart from what is seen in the appendix. Thus, they would have to decide for themselves whether they were conversations, and whether they were conducted online or not.

As mentioned above, no CMC Hong Kong English features are found in P3 and P4, and there are also no general CMC features. Between the two passages, P3 has more Hong Kong English features than P4. In P3, several Hong Kong English features can be found, for example, the use of prepositions (e.g. “at the meanwhile”), and marking of the plural (e.g. “... decrease the competitiveness of itself as one of the main competitor”).

P4 also contains some Hong Kong English features, for example, tense

¹² ‘u like ar’: is a literal translation from 妳(*nei3* – u: you) 鍾意(*zung1 ji3* – like/prefer) 啊(*aa3* – end of sentence particle).

¹³ ‘u wait jor gum long jui hai yiu hair cut ar’: 妳 wait 咁耐就係要 hair cut 啊? – pronounced as: *nei3 wait zo2 gam3 noi6 zau6 hai6 jiu3 haircut aa4*, which means ‘You are just wanting a haircut by waiting for so long?’.

¹⁴ “Cos dunno ma!!”: literally translated from 因為(*jan1 wai6* – cos: because) 唔知道(*ng4 zi1 dou3* – dunno: don’t know) 嘛(*maa3* – end of sentence particle).

¹⁵ *la* – pronounced as *laa3*

¹⁶ *bor* – pronounced as *bo3*

inconsistencies (e.g. “Later, the video game market *continues* to expand rapidly and *was* dominated by big companies such as Nintendo and Sega until the 90s”), and the marking of articles (e.g. “... wider ranges of games were available to the gamers in the modern era of Ø video game industry). It is noted that these features are not necessarily exclusive to Hong Kong English. Other non native varieties of English can also share these features. However, the fact that the two passages having features not exclusive to Hong Kong English does not mean that the two passages are not valid for testing the hypothesis. This is because these features are indeed in the category of Hong Kong English, even if they are not exclusive. More importantly, as these texts are all written by Hong Kong People, the features within these texts are undeniably Hong Kong English features.

Two versions of the passages were provided to different informants. In the first version (version A), the order of the passages was P1 – P2 – P3 – P4, and, in the second version (version B), the order was P3 – P4 – P1 – P2. Version A was given to half of the informants, and the other half received version B. This was to counterbalance the ordering effect.

4.2.2. The Questions of the Interviews

Each informant was given approximately five minutes to read through the passage briefly, and then they were asked several questions concerning the authors of the passages. The questions of the interviews are listed below:

1	Do you understand the text? If not, which bits do you not understand?
2	Who can the authors be? Please describe the author(s).
3	How old are the authors? Are they men or women? What are their education levels? Where do the authors come from?
4	On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being totally not Hong Kong and 10 being totally Hong Kong) how will you rank the texts? Why?
5	Do you write this kind of texts? Why?

Table 2. Interview questions.

For each of the passages, I asked the informants the 5 questions as given in the table above. The point of the first question was to test whether they were familiar with both the CMC language and CMC Hong Kong English. As CMC Hong Kong English was culturally specific, people who were not bilingual in Cantonese and English, or who were not familiar with the Hong Kong culture, would find P1 and P2 difficult, or even

impossible, to understand. Thus, if they could understand the passages, especially P1 and P2, then I took this to indicate that they were familiar to Hong Kong culture.

Question 2 and 3 asked the informants to make reasonable guesses about the authors'/writers' identities. The most useful data for this project was the question about the national identities of the writers, which was asked at the end of question 3. However, the age and level of education of the writers might provide useful information to the study too. To start asking a more open-ended question allowed the possibility for the informants to provide the project with other useful data, too. Also, as people had a tendency to give answers they were sure of first, by observing the answers given by the informants in the more open-ended question (i.e. question 2), one could observe more deeply the identity constructions of the passage writers from the informants' (reader') points of view.

Question 4 asked the informants to rank how "Hong Kong" the passages were. This question allowed the informants to quantify their impressions of the passages, and the scores could be used as a quantified variable to compare the "Hong Kong-ness" of the passages. After giving the scores, the informants were then asked to explain why they had given such scores to each of the passages. While the first part of the question asked for their impressions as a whole, the second part elicited more refined explanations for the impressions the informants had.

After the informants had given a score to each passage, they were then asked whether they would write in the styles of the passages; and if yes, then in which particular occasions; and if no, why not. It was hoped that the question would bring out the informants' attitudes towards the two kinds of texts (i.e. texts written in CMC Hong Kong English and texts written in Hong Kong English). By doing so, the two forms of Hong Kong English could be more clearly distinguished.

In Kachru's (1992) model for non-native Englishes, Kachru divided the process of development of non-native models into four stages. The first stage was *non-recognition*, in which people denied that there was any local variety. In the second stage, people recognised that the local speech in a variety was different from the standard variety/varieties. They gave their own varieties a name, but these varieties were negatively conceived, and telling people that they spoke in such varieties was "an ego cracking insult" (57). In the third stage, the non-native variety was slowly accepted as a norm. Finally, there was a recognition stage. At this stage, people felt that it was not necessary to "show a distinction between linguistic norm

and linguistic behavior” (57), and/or, people recognised the national use of their varieties of English.

It could be seen that the attitudes towards varieties of languages were a very important element in distinguishing one variety from another. Thus, if there were differences in the attitudes towards the two forms of Hong Kong English, one could more surely say that the two forms should be distinguished.

As the interviews were not designed to be tightly-structured, the order of the questions (especially question 2, 3 and 4) could be varied, and I asked the informants other relevant questions if I found their responses could be expanded by further details. At the end of each interview, informants were asked whether they had any final comments on the passages.

5. Results and Discussions

In the following section, I will present and discuss the results of the interviews. The answers to each of the questions will be discussed in 4 parts. The first part will be the answers to question 1, the second part will be the responses to question 2 and 3, and the remaining two parts will be about the answers to questions 4 and 5 respectively. It is hoped that by presenting the results in this way a clearer picture about the informants' attitudes to written Hong Kong English and CMC Hong Kong English can be seen.

For the convenience of the discussions, CMC Hong Kong English will be referred to as "CHKE", and Hong Kong English will be "HKE". Thus CMC Hong Kong English features will be "CHKE features" and non-CMC Hong Kong English features will be "Non-CHKE features". The informants will be referred to as "subj", followed by a hyphen and the latter that represents them in Table 1. For example, informant C will be referred to as "subj-C". Passages 1 to 4 will be regarded as "P1", "P2", "P3" and "P4" respectively. Participants A and B in P1 and P2 will be referred to as "A1", "B1", "A2" and "B2" respectively. When quoting the response of the informants, changes (from CMC jargon back to written English) are sometimes necessary. These changes will be presented in square brackets. However, whenever possible, the original quotes are retained, despite the grammatical errors.

5.1. Understanding of the Passages

Most of the informants said that they understood all of the passages, but there were some exceptions.

Subj-D (concerning P2)

"...they can't hold their decision long[. They] always change their mind"

"i dun know who [wants to] chat and who do[es] not?";

Subj-F (concerning P1)

"...need to think them back to chinese word";

Subj-G (concerning P2)

"i can guest its meaning, but i think it's strange at my first sight";

Subj-I (concerning P3)

“um..... i am not sure [what] the passage [is about]..... it is [about] technology?”

Subj-P (concerning P4)

“don’t understand the voca[bularies]”.

For P1, apart from subj-F, all the other informants reported that they had no difficulties in understanding P1. Subj-F said that he understood P1 as well, but he only needed to “use more time”. So in general, it could be said that all of the informants understood P1.

Subj-D and subj-G said that they had difficulties when reading P2. Subj-D had difficulty working out whether A2 or B2 wanted to chat. He referred to it, first, as “contradiction”. Then he decided that it was not a good word to use, so he explained it with the sentence quoted above. It could be seen that subj-D could understand the content of P2, but he was just not sure about the intentions of the speakers.

Similarly, Subj-G understood the meaning of the passage, but he found it strange at first sight. The particular sentence that he found difficult was “Am here to say hi only la”. It was believed that it was the lack of subject in the sentence that subj-G found strange. As cutting away of the subject was not considered common practice in CMC for Hong Kong People, it was understandable that subj-G needed a bit more time to understand its meaning. Therefore, it could be said that both Subj-D and Subj-G had no difficulties understanding CHKE features.

Subj-I found P3 difficult due to the topic matter. It may infer that it was the HKE features, which were different from Standard English, that hindered her from fully understanding the text. However, instead of claiming that the English was not standard enough, or that the sentences were grammatically incorrect, she said that it was the topic matter, (which was not her expertise,) that confused her. This suggests that it was the topic matter, but not the HKE features, that hindered her from understanding the passage. The fact that she could not spot any HKE features from the passage supported this point. This point was also supported by the “Hongkong-ness” scoring (section 5.4.), which will be discussed below. In the scoring section, Subj-I thought that P3 was least Hong Kong among the 4 passage.

Subj-P, on the other hand, could not totally understand P4 because of the vocabulary used. She thought that some of the words in the passage were too difficult for her. Therefore, it was the use of words, instead of the HKE syntactic features, that led to

her not fully understanding the text.

Even though some of the informants had difficulties understanding the passage, no informant reported that they could not understand the texts because of the CHKE features in P1 and P2, or the HKE features in P3 and P4. As mentioned above, CHKE was very culture (Hong Kong) and domain (internet) specific, and their understanding of the texts suggested that, among these informants, all of them had an understanding of the Hong Kong internet culture. In fact, this was not surprising at all, because people in this age group (18-24) were one of the most avid users of the internet instant messengers. This Hong Kong CMC culture was largely shaped by these people. Therefore it was not abnormal to see the informants having no problem understanding CHKE.

5.2. The Identities of the Writers

5.2.1. Passage 1

All of the informants correctly guessed that A1 and B1 were from Hong Kong, and they thought that the passage was very “Hong Kong”. For instance,

“both are very familiar with Cantonese, but the style doesn’t look like Chinese” (Subj-A);

“From the conversation one can see that they were using Cantonese to talk to each other... therefore one can see that this passage was written by Hong Kong People¹⁷” (Subj-B);

“I am quite sure the authors are from HK” (Subj-D);

“both teenage, girls, secondary school, hong kong definitely” (Subj-L);

“Obviously, A is in UK, while B is in HK. Well, both are HK people” (Subj-N).

The informants are generally quite sure about the fact that A1 and B1 were from Hong Kong. They provided different reasons to support their opinions. These reasons can be divided into 3 groups, the first of which was by content (no. =1). The reason given by Subj-O was the only one in this group:

¹⁷ “從 2 人 ge 對話可以睇得出佢地係用廣東話交談 ge... 因此可見呢篇文係由香港人寫 ge”

“sing K, shopping... and because your sister [before] also want to come back to cut her hair”.

The second group of informants made judgments by looking at the style (no. =2) of the passage, for example,

“...as they do talk in a very hk style” (Subj-C);

“the style doesn’t look like Chinese” (Subj-A).

These informants did not spot any CHKE features. They commented on the passage by just saying that the style of the text was Hong Kong. Therefore, they were put together as a group.

The third group made judgments by features (no. =13). Informants in this group could spot CHKE features, and they showed it by quoting the features they found in P1.

“Because a lot of words, for example “hai ar”, were pinyin of Cantonese. Also, I think only people who understand Cantonese could decode the this passage¹⁸” (Subj-B);

“The way in which they communicated... the words were pinyin, e.g. ‘leng’ for beautiful¹⁹” (Subj-K).

Some of the informants even gave a name to the features they spotted:

“they are speaking in chinglish” (Subj-G);

“[because] the english’s..... obviously hk icq eng...” (Subj-E).

Among the informants who named the features, “Chinglish” was used by most of the informants. The two other names were “English-Cantonese” and “hk icq eng”. The features the informants spotted were indeed CHKE feature mentioned in the section 3.4.. They included end of sentence particles, romanised Cantonese, and literal

¹⁸ “因為好多字好似 “hai ar” 等都係從廣東話中拼出，此外，呢篇文我認為只有用廣東話 ge 概念先可以解讀到整篇文章”

¹⁹ “佢地用既溝通方式... 文字英文拼音, e.g. leng for 靚”

translation from Cantonese to English.

Some of the informants were asked to explain what “Chinglish” was, and they gave the following answers:

“unique culture of hk”

“using English letters to type out Cantonese pronunciations” (Subj-L);

“hmm.. Chinglish means chinese english, it’s a [kind of] English mis-used by local students who are incapable of using standard enlgish”

“wrong grammar, wrong usage...” (Subj-M);

“It is an unique style that people in Hong Kong use when speaking english. We add a lot of Chinese expressions that even don’t ever exist in English when we talk and write, such as jar, lor etc” (Subj-N).

From the above explanations, it could be seen that the informants had in their mind what this variety was, what features this variety had, and the culture that it was linked with. This variety, according to the informants, represented a unique culture of Hong Kong. It consisted of Chinese expressions that did not exist in English. However, only people who were incapable of using standard written English would use it.

Subj-M’s comment highlights an interesting point. On the one hand, she said that Chinglish was grammatical mistakes and wrong usage of English. Nonetheless when asked what particular Chinglish features she found in P1, she quoted “wa.. gum mei ho leng lor”, which was CHKE. She further commented on this quote by saying that “u see, they use ping-yin even la” (“they even used pinyin in their conversation”), in which “la” was an end of sentence particle (i.e. CHKE feature).

Obviously this “la” was part of Chinglish to her. Despite her claim of having an A grade in English Language in both public examinations, she used CHKE in her interview. This, I believe, was because the notion of Chinglish to subj-M consisted of two parts. The first part was HKE, which was generally used by Hong Kong People, in spite of their unwillingness to write differently from standard written English. The second part was CHKE, which was not as negatively perceived as the former part. Later, when asked whether she wrote in the style of P1 and P2, subj-M said “officially no, but sometimes did”. I would interpret that her “officially no” was denoting HKE in general, while “sometimes did” was denoting CHKE.

5.2.2. Passage 2

Again, all of the informants thought A2 and B2 of P2 were from Hong Kong. When compared to P1, informants thought P2 was less Hong Kong:

“fewer “ar”, “le”, etc, ending sound, more difficult to guess” (subj-A).

“passage 1, a[&]b must be come from hk passage 2 may be not” (subj-F).

“It seems like both of them are having their study outside HK, as they write with more formal English instances” (subj-N)

The main reason for why they thought P2 was less Hong Kong than P1 was the fact that they found less CMC Hong Kong features. However, as mentioned above, none of the informants thought A2 and B2 were not from Hong Kong. In fact, they all said that P2 was also very Hong Kong, and many of them (no. =13) could spot CMC Hong Kong features in the passage. The most obvious features to them were end of sentence particles.

For those who did not say that they recognised the CHKE features, it was the writing style that picked up on (no. =2). Subj-E did not provide any reason why he thought P2 was written by Hong Kong People, so his answers were grouped as ‘by intuition’ (no. =1).

5.2.3. Age, Education Level, and CMC Hong Kong English

In addition to guessing the nationality of the writers of P1 and P2, the informants were also asked to guess the age and education level of these writers. Their response to these two questions (i.e. “How old do you think the writers of P1 and P2 are?” and “What are their education level?”) was enlightening:

Informant	Passage 1		Passage 2	
	Age	Education level	Age	Education level
A	17-20	High School		University level
B	16	Secondary 4	+20-30	
C	18	Community college		
D	13-15	(lowest among the writers of		A= secondary school

		the 4 passages)		B= university
E	16-17	College student	+20	
F	15-18	Secondary 5		Higher than secondary 5
G	20	University undergraduate	20-24	University undergraduate
H		university		University
I	20	University undergraduate	20 or less	A= secondary school B= university
J	18	High school	20	University undergraduate
K	16		25	
L		Secondary school	20	
M		Secondary 4 or 5		Undergraduate
N	Early 20s	University undergraduate	+20	University undergraduate
O	teenagers			
P	16-20			

Table 3. The age and education level of the writers of P1 and P2, according to the informants²⁰.

According to the informants, A1 and B1 were on average 17 years old, and they were going to secondary school, community college, or university. A2 and B2, on the other hand, were considered to be generally older (above 20 years old), and more educated. Fewer informants thought A2 and B2 were in secondary school, and the informants tended to guess they were university students.

Having obtained the above information, I measured the informant-guessed identities of the four writers (grouped in two – P1 and P2, according to the passage) in terms of “sophistication”. In this measurement, the older and the better educated were regarded as more sophisticated. With the available information, the chart shown below was made.

Informant	Older	Better educated	More sophisticated
A	?	P2	P2
B	P2	?	P2
C	=	?	=
D	P2	P2	P2
E	P2	?	P2
F	?	P2	P2

²⁰ Due to the fact that some informants did not answer the questions, some of the cells were unfilled.

G	=	=	=
H	=	=	=
I	P1	P1	P1
J	P2	P2	P2
K	P2	?	P2
L	?	P2	P2
M	?	P2	P2
N	=	=	=
O	?	?	?
P	?	?	?

Table 4. A comparison of the level of sophistication of the writers according to the informants²¹.

From table 4, it can be seen that among all the informants, only 1 (subj-I) thought that the writers of P1 were more sophisticated. 9 informants believed that writers of P2 were more sophisticated, while 4 said they are as sophisticated as each other. The data seemed to suggest that informants tend to think that writers of P2 were generally older and better educated.

This could be explained by the informants' attitudes to HKE and CHKE. Mentioned previously, informants often linked HKE to bad English or improper English. Therefore, people who used more HKE (including CHKE) features would be younger and less educated in their view. Also, in sociolinguistic theories, adolescents were often found to speak differently from the adult norms for the purpose of establishing their social identities. These alternative norms formed by the adolescents were often thought to be non-standard in the linguistic market (Chamber 1995: 172). It was believed that in this linguistic market (the internet used by Hong Kong People), the same dynamic worked as well. Although there were no apparent standard in this linguistic market, and the chatgroup users were often the younger generation, the younger people in the age group were still considered to be the ones who initiated changes. Driven by this point of view, it was not surprising to see informants having a tendency to think that the writers of the P1 were slightly younger and less educated compared to the writers of P2.

²¹ Keys:

P1 → Passage 1

P2 → Passage 2

= → the same

? → the information was not enough for evaluation

5.2.4. Passage 3

As mentioned, P3 and P4 were very different from P1 and P2 because of the genres in which these passages were written. P3 and P4 were written as formal written work with an academic purpose, while P1 and P2 were chat logs written by online chatters. In the section 3.6., the difference in the forms between HKE features and CHKE features was briefly discussed. It was made clear that the formal differences between P3 & P4 and P1 & P2 was that the former two contained only non-CHKE features, while the latter two contained both CMC and non-CHKE features.

In the interviews²², the informants had quite different opinions concerning who the writer of P3 was. While some of the informants said that the author was a westerner from the UK or the US, some said that he/she was Asian, and some other thought that he/she was a local Hong Kong Person. Below were some of the responses from the informants.

“i thought it is an level practical paper done by a f.7 boy (hk)” (Subj-C);

“the writer is smart, can point out the problem at once, but no much suggestion”

“I think she is from British” (Subj-D);

“[The writer] maybe come from usa or uk”

“the passage makes sense and with support reason”

“It looks like passage from newspaper” (Subj-F);

“[the writer was] male, above 23, U grad and Chinese” (Subj-J);

“i guess the author is some kind of an analyst writing a report of the online retailer for magazine or something like that”

“i would say [the writer was from] US” (Subj-N).

Hence, the informants' answers were very diverse concerning who the author of P3 was. Some thought he/she was a secondary school student from Hong Kong, while some believed him/her to be a professional from the UK or US. Among the informants, 5 people said the author of P3 was a Hong Kong Person, 1 thought that the author was an Asian, while 9 of the informants believed that the passage was

²² It was noted that, as there were no CHKE features, what the informants found were all non-CHKE features. Therefore, the HKE features mentioned in these two sections (5.2.3 & 5.2.4.) were all non-CHKE features.

written by someone who was American or British.

Despite the diversity of answers, one could see a rough pattern if one looked at how they came to such decisions. In a similar way to what I have done in the above, I divided the answers into different groups according to the methods by which they came to their judgments. Unlike in P1, for P3, there were 4, instead of 3, groups. Besides features, style and content, a few informants answered using their intuition, for instance,

(to the question “Why do you think he’s from the UK or the US?”)

“I don’t know. It’s just my feeling²³” (subj-P);

(to the question “why do you think he’s from Hong Kong”)

“It’s only my intuition²⁴” (subj-K).

Below is a table to show the methods by which the judgments were made and their answer to the question “where do you think the author comes from”.

	By features	By style	By content	By intuition
From HK	3	1		1
From Asia	1			
From UK/US		5	2	2
Not sure				1 ²⁵

Table 5. The methods by which the informants decided where the authors of P4 came from.

This shows that, if the informants spotted any HKE features, they would think the author was from Hong Kong, or other Asian countries (China, in this case). However, if the informants were judging by the style of the passage, they would tend to think that the author was from the UK or US. The two informants who paid attention to the content concluded that the passage was written by a British or an American person. For the remaining four informants, one believed that the author was a Hong Kong Person, the other two thought that the author was from the UK or the US, and the last one could not at all tell the national identity of the author.

²³ “唔知呀覺得囉”

²⁴ “直覺 ga jor”

²⁵ The response of subj-A was regarded as “not sure”. Although he eventually came to the conclusion that the author of P1 was from Asia, the fact that he used 7 conversation turns to make sure suggested that he was not sure.

5.2.5. Passage 4

Similar to the responses in P3, informants had different opinions concerning who the writer of P4 was. For example,

“this one more possible from HK ar” (subj-A);

“author is boy and he came from some developed cities his education [level] is also [university] degree” (subj-F);

“twenty something, Japanese, undergraduates” (subj-G);

“[the writer was] sophisticated, professional, [and the passage was] like a magazine paragraph” (subj-H);

“male, uni, from an English-speaking country” (subj-M).

Of all the informants, only two said that the author was from Hong Kong, while 11 said that he/she was from the UK or US. Two informants thought the author was from other Asian countries, while the last one was not sure where the author came from.

It could be seen that, compared with the responses to P3, not many more informants thought the author of P4 was from an English speaking country, and less informants thought that he/she was a Hong Kong Person. This could be related to the amount of HKE features in the two passages. As mentioned above, P4 has fewer HKE features compared to P3. Also, the informants believed that the features in P3 were more marked than ones in P4, as some informants could spot the features in P3, while none of them could do so in P4.

As I had done for the other passage, I grouped the responses into different kinds, and the following table was made.

	By features	By style	By content	By intuition
From HK		2		
From Asia		1	1	
From UK/US		3	6	2
Not Sure			1	

Table 6. The methods by which the informants decided where the authors of P4 came from.

Looking at the table, one can see that no informants judged where the author of P4 came from by looking at the HKE features of the passage. This seems to suggest that, none of the informants could spot any HKE features, even though P4 contained a number of them.

Another observation was the fact that if the informants judged by looking at simply at the content of the passage, they would tend to think the author was from the UK or US. According to these informants, since the passage mentioned the US, and they could see no other clues of the author's identity, they decided that the author was American. Subj-G said the author was from Japan because he thought a passage about video games would be written by the Japanese.

Instead of pin-pointing where the author came from, subj-I gave a list of very diverse suggestions (US/UK/Japan). So her response was categorised as "not sure".

If the informants formed an opinion by looking at the style of the passage, they would come up with quite different conclusions. While some thought that the author was from Hong Kong or Asia, others thought that he/she was from the UK or US. This difference came from the way in which the informants looked at the style.

For those who said the author was a Hong Kong Person or an Asian, they thought the style of the passage was straight forward, simple, and easy to understand:

"er... ... it's very easy to understand for me, so I think it's not written by western ppl" (subj-A);

"in the first one [P3], the author use much difficult words, and the sentence structure is abit complicated but the second one [P4] does not contain a difficult word, and the sentence is simple and straight forward, the main point is, this one contain no idea, just describe the fact" (subj-D)

The informants thought that the author should not be from the UK or US because the passage contained no difficult words or sentence structures, so the passage was easy to understand. This suggested that these informants had a stereotype of what an academic passage written by native English speakers (in particular British or

American people) should be. According to these informants, a native English speaking writer should use complicated sentence structures and long words when writing this kind of passage, and only non-native speakers would use simple sentence structures and wordings in these kinds of text.²⁶

If the informants said that the author was from the UK or US, it was because they thought the style of the passage was impersonal and professional:

(in answering why he thought the writer was from the US)

“the use of words and the writing style”

”like NY times ar” (subj-H);

“just because of the style. :P”

“it looks professional” (subj-J).

From their response, it seems that these informants thought that the passage was written in an impersonal way. Subj-H said that it was like a passage in the New York Times. This suggests that he thought the style of P4 was professional. According to these informants, native English speakers were capable of writing more professionally and impersonally compared to non-native speakers, especially Hong Kong People²⁷.

5.3. CMC Hong Kong English and Hong Kong English

In general, the more HKE features (regardless of whether they were CMC or non-CHKE features) an informant could spot in a passage, the more likely it was that informant would claim the author of the passage was from Hong Kong. There was, however, a distinction between the opinions about P1 & P2, which contained both CMC and non-CHKE features, and the opinions about P3 & P4, which contained only non-CHKE features. One distinction can be seen from the fact that some informants would give names to the features in P1 and P2, while, with these informants, the features in P3 and P4 were merely be grammatical mistakes and errors.

²⁶ The conversation between the interviewer and subj-H could illustrate this point:

Z: so the more sophisticated [the style of writing] is, the less chance that the author is from HK?

H: hai gua (“maybe yes”)

Z: why? Hong Kong People’s English are not sophisticated?

H: less sophisticated and organized lor

²⁷ However, subj-C mentioned that P4 was like a press release, yet it was written by a Hong Kong Person. This shows that some informants thought “writing professional English” and “being a Hong Kong Person” were not always contradictory. Nonetheless, he also thought that this author from Hong Kong, who was capable of writing professional English, was well educated. According to subj-C, the author of P4 was the most highly educated of all the authors, being a university graduate majoring in marketing.

Joseph (2004: 11-13) said that naming was one of the major parts of defining one's identity. Names as signifiers defined the meanings - identities in this case - of the signified. The naming of the features in P1 and P2 shows that the informants recognised a pattern or regularity in this group of features. It also suggests that these features were given, a meaning by the informants. When asked what "English-Chinese", "hk icq eng", and "Chinglish" were, the informants said they were features that were "unique to Hong Kong culture" and this uniqueness was shown by the CHKE features. "Chinglish" could include spelling and grammatical mistakes, but the essence of "Chinglish", according to these informants, includes features like romanised Cantonese, end of sentence particles and literal translations from Cantonese to English. These features were exactly CHKE features. Therefore, by giving names to these features, it could be said that the informants had given these features a meaning.

So what was this meaning the informants had given to CHKE? As mentioned, "Chinglish" to these informants was a kind of unique Hong Kong culture, and it was not something that one can see in the writings of people from other cultures. Thus, "Chinglish" represented the unique "Hongkong-ness" of the people who used it. In other words, "Chinglish" was an identity marker of the Hong Kong People, to mark the "Hongkong-ness" of the person who used it.

However, it was noted that, firstly, not all informants had given names to CHKE features. Among the 16 informants, 13 of them recognised the features in P1 and P2, yet only 6 of them gave these features a name. The other 7 of them spotted those features, and claimed that their decisions were made due to spotting the features. They, nevertheless, did not give the features any name. So, it could be seen that the naming of CHKE features was still not prevalent.

Another distinction between CHKE and HKE was that CHKE was more recognisable to the informants than HKE. Below is a list of methods by which the informants judged where the authors of the passages came from.

	By features	By style	By content	By intuition
Passage 1				
From HK	13	2	1	
From Asia				
From UK/UK				

Not sure				
Passage 2				
From HK	13	2		1
From Asia				
From UK/US				
Not sure				
Passage 3				
From HK	3	1		1
From Asia	1			
From UK/US		5	2	2
Not Sure				1
Passage 4				
From HK		2		
From Asia		1	1	
From UK/US		3	6	2
Not sure			1	

Table 7. The methods by which the informants decided where the authors of the passages came from.

From the table, it can be seen that while almost all of the informants spotted the CHKE features in P1 and P2, only a few informants (no. =4) noticed the features of HKE in P3, and none of the informants recognised any features of HKE in P4. Although both P1 and P2 contained both CMC and non-CHKE features, when asked what features they noticed, all of the informants said that it was the CHKE features that they spotted. CHKE features were very apparent to the informants, while non-CMC Hong Kong features were much less obvious.

This would indicate that there is another difference between CHKE and HKE. For CHKE, Hong Kong People could easily recognise it as something different from other forms of English. HKE, nevertheless, was not as easily recognisable to them. As non-CHKE features were not easily recognisable. This would sometimes lead to the informants thinking that this form of English is no different to the English that is written by native speakers.

The following section will provide further evidence to support the argument that says Hong Kong People tend to link CHKE, rather than non-CHKE, to Hong Kong Identity.

5.4. Scoring: How Hong Kong the Passages Are?

Question number 4 of the interview asked the informants to give each passage a score in the range of 1 to 10, in which 1 meant definitely not Hong Kong, and 10 meant completely Hong Kong. It was hoped that, through this question, it would be possible to obtain the informants' impressions on how culturally "Hong Kong" CHKE and HKE were. In other words, this question was to let informants quantify their impressions on the "Hongkong-ness" of the passages. When I asked the question "How Hong Kong is the passage?" during the interview, informants had to interpret for themselves what "how Hong Kong" meant. In this case, the informants had to consider several elements to decide the "Hongkong-ness" of the passage, which included how likely it was for the passage to be produced by Hong Kong People, and how much of the context of this passage was specific to Hong Kong²⁸.

The table below shows the scores of the passages given by the informants, the total score (out of 160), and the average score of each passage (round off to two decimal points).

	P1	P2	P3	P4
Subj-A	9	7	5.5	6
Subj-B	10	7	6	4
Subj-C	10	5	7	6
Subj-D	10	10	1	5
Subj-E	10	10	2	3.5
Subj-F	10	8	5	5
Subj-G	10	7	2	5
Subj-H	10	8	4	2
Subj-I	10	10	5	7.5
Subj-J	10	10	2	1
Subj-K	9	7	5	6

²⁸ However, one limitation of this question was that the elements that the informants used to consider the "Hongkong-ness" could only be indirectly obtained by asking the follow-up question: "why did you give such a score?". This follow-up question was asked every time after the informants had given a score to a passage, therefore the variables with which the informants considered when scoring the passage could be seen as well.

Subj-L	10	7	6	1
Subj-M	9	5	3	1
Subj-N	10	9	1	5
Subj-O	10	8	8	5
Subj-P	10	8	5	5
Total	157	126	67.5	68
Average	9.81	7.88	4.22	4.25

Table 8. Hong Kong scores of the passages.

The table indicates that, according to the informants, P1 was very Hong Kong. Except for 3 informants who gave P1 nine scores, the rest of the informants gave a full mark score. This score suggests that the informants were quite sure about the “Hong Kong-ness” of the passage. As mentioned above, 13 of the 16 informants reported that they considered the CHKE as the key element when deciding who the authors were. One could reasonably argue that CHKE was strongly linked to the “Hongkong-ness”.

Having fewer CHKE features, P2 was scored generally less highly than P1. Some informants gave P1 and P2 the same score²⁹, but no informants scored P2 higher than P1. When asked why P2 was scored lower than P1 in terms of “Hongkong-ness”, some informants gave the following response:

“fewer “ar”, “le”, etc, ending sound, more difficult to guess” (subj-A);

“less ar, bor, lar, etc” (subj-H);

“B [in P2] [has done] “normal” english mostly in the passage and only “ma” and “bor” once or twice” (subj-L);

“P4 is 9. As oppose to 10, I only rate it a 9 because the two people here are writing with more formal English, but still, it is quite HK style’s English” (subj-N).

This implies that the informants scored P2 lower than P1 because they saw more “formal English” or “normal English” in P2 and less CHKE features (e.g. “ar”, “bor”, “lar”, & etc., which were Cantonese end of sentence particles). This, again, shows that the “Hongkong-ness” scores the informants gave were strongly related to the amount of CHKE features a passage has. The more CHKE features an informant spotted in a

²⁹ Subj-D, subj-E, subj-I, and subj-J gave both passage 10 scores.

passage, the higher the “Hongkong-ness” score the passage would have.

Compared to P1 and P2, P3 and P4 had much lower average marks. Many of the informants said that the passages were much less Hong Kong when compared to P1 and P2, even though both P3 and P4 had some CHKE features. However, subj-C gave P3 a score higher than the one he gave to P2, and subj-O scored P3 as highly as P2. When asked why, they gave the following response:

“yep because hk style is not just sth like ‘mud/ma/la’ stuff but the context I know”
(subj-C);

“because my text book article are similar” (subj-O).

Instead of judging by looking at the features of CHKE, subj-C claimed that the context, in which the passage was written, was the essence of a passage’s “Hongkong-ness”. Subj-O was judging the “Hongkong-ness” by the context too. She said that, because P3 was like an English text book passage, the passage was as Hong Kong as P2. Even she thought the author of P3 was a westerner.

Apart from the above two exceptions, all other informants rated both P3 and P4 lower than P1 or P2. As a result, while the average scores of P1 and P2 were 9.81 and 7.88 respectively, P3 and P4’s average scores were both less than 4.3. In the informants’ point of view, P3 and P4 was much less “Hong Kong” compared to P1 and P2. This, again, could be due to the fact that P1 and P2 contained CHKE features while P3 and P4 did not. Informants could recognise CHKE features more easily than non-CHKE features. Therefore, the informants, noticing the CHKE features, yet not spotting any non-CHKE feature, would tend to think P3 and P4 contained less “Hongkong-ness” than P1 and P2. This could also be the main reason why P3 and P4 were scored lower than P1 and P2.

5.5. The Use of CMC Hong Kong English and Hong Kong English

Question 5 asked the informants whether they would write English in the styles of the passages, and in which occasions they would write in such styles if the answer to the previous question was yes. As discussed above, CHKE was strongly linked to Hong Kong identity. However, the above showed only the readers’ points of view. This meant that the variety was recognised by the readers as an identity marker. Whether the writers meant to use it as an identity marker was unknown. Therefore, by asking

question 5, I hoped to see whether these informants, as writers of CHKE, would use this variety as an identity marker.

The following table showed the answers to “do you write in the style of this passage?”. If the answer was yes, the occasions in which they write in such a style would be shown in the next column. If the answer was no, the reason why they did not write in such a style was shown. Further comments concerning this question were also put in this column.

Informant	Passage 1		Passage 2	
	Write?	What occasions?/ Why not?/ Further comments	Write?	What occasions?/ Why not?/ Further comments
A	Yes	MSN/ICQ	Yes	MSN/ICQ
B	No	Because it is difficult to understand/ I don't know Chinese Pinyin	Yes	Sometimes on ICQ
C	Yes	ICQ	Yes	ICQ
D	Yes	Only ICQ/MSN	No	Because the speakers were contradicting themselves
E	Yes	ICQ/MSN	Yes	ICQ/MSN
F	Yes	Mainly on ICQ only	Yes	Mainly on ICQ only
G	Yes	On ICQ occasionally	Yes	On ICQ occasionally
H	Yes	MSN/ICQ/emails with friends	Yes	MSN/ICQ/emails with friends
I	Yes	Sometimes on ICQ, but not always	Yes	Sometimes on ICQ, but not always
J	Yes	Occasionally when talking with friends on ICQ/MSN	Yes	Occasionally when talking with friends on ICQ/MSN
K	Yes	When chatting to friends online	Yes	When chatting to friends online
L	Yes	Sometimes on MSN	Yes	Sometimes on MSN
M	Yes	Officially no, but sometimes do on ICQ	Yes	Officially no, but sometimes do on ICQ
N	Yes	In “written conversations”	Yes	In “written conversations”
O	Yes	MSN/ICQ	Yes	MSN/ICQ
P	No	Because I type in Chinese	No	Because I type in Chinese

Table 9. Informants' answers to the question “do you write in the style of P1 and P2?”.

This table shows that most of the informants said that they would write like the style of P1 and P2, and the occasions in which they would write in such styles were on

instant messengers (i.e. ICQ or MSN Messenger). Among the informants who said no to the questions, subj-B said that he would not write in the style of P1 because he felt that the romanised Cantonese was difficult to understand. The fact that he did not know Chinese pinyin was also a reason why he would not write in P1's style. Subj-D said that he would not write in the style of P2 because he did not understand the content of P2. He said he could not work out whether it was A2 or B2 who wanted to continue to chat. Subj-P said he would not use the style of either P1 or P2 because she typed in Chinese (Cantonese), when she chatted online.

The answers the informants gave show that CHKE was being used by the informants. The domain of usage, not surprisingly, was the internet, especially instant messenger. One informant (subj-H) said that he would use this style of writing to write emails to friends too. For informal internet communication, CHKE seems to have become a popular choice among the Hong Kong adolescents.

Concerning P3 and P4, the informants had the following answers to question 5:

Informant	Passage 3		Passage 4	
	Write?	What occasions?/ Why not?/ further comments	Write?	What occasions?/ Why not?/ further comments
A	Yes	Homework	Yes	Homework
B	Yes	In general life	Yes	Homework
C	Yes	examinations	Yes	Work
D	No	No such English level	Yes	
E	Yes	Homework	Yes	Homework
F	Yes	Homework and exams	Yes	Homework and exams
G	Yes	But will be writing in more mistakes	Yes	But will be writing in more mistakes
H	Yes	I'm at this level of writing English	Yes	But will be writing in more mistakes
I	Yes	English homework	Yes	English homework
J	Yes	At work	Yes	At work
K	Yes	Homework	Yes	Homework
L	Yes	Homework/ When I don't use Chinglish on MSN	Yes	Homework/ When I don't use Chinglish on MSN
M	No	Because I have got an A in English exams	Yes	
N	Yes	Homework	Yes	Homework

O	No	I don't like formal style	No	I don't like formal style
P	Yes	Homework	Yes	Homework

Table 10. Informants' answers to the question "do you write in the style of P3 and P4?".

Looking at the informants' answers, one can see that most of the informants would use the style of P3 and P4 when writing. The major domain of using such a style was at school (homework and examinations), and at work. Subj-L said that she would use it on internet instant messenger (MSN Messenger) too, but only when she did not use CHKE ("Chinglish", in her use of the terms). For informants who said no to P3, the answers were quite different. Subj-O said that she did not like formal writing style, hence she would not write in the style of P3 (and also P4). While subj-M said she would not write in the style of P3 because her English was better than the one in the passage, subj-D thought he could not write in such a style because his level of English was not good enough. This difference could be due to the fact that they viewed P3 quite differently. As mentioned above, subj-D thought the passage was definitely not Hong Kong, and the writer of the passage was a British university student. Subj-M, on the other hand, thought that the passage had "quite a number of grammatical mistakes", and it should have been written by "a pretend-to-be-good english writer". Therefore, while subj-D thought the English in P3 was too good for him to produce, subj-M correctly spotted the grammatical mistakes in the passage, and refused to write in such style because of the passage's "bad English".

It seemed that the informants would be happy writing in HKE. However, when one looked closely, one would find that this might not be the case. Firstly, in the eyes of many of the informants, P3 and P4 (especially P4) were not produced by Hong Kong People. To these informants, the passages were written by native English speakers. Therefore, they would happily write in such a style because they did not think that it contained HKE features. Secondly, even if the informants said that they would write in such styles when they knew that the passages were written in HKE, they simply did not want to. For instance, subj-G, when asked whether he would write in the styles of passage 1 and 2, said,

"no mostly in [P4], but with many mistakes".

As mentioned above, subj-G could not spot any mistakes (i.e. HKE feature) in the passage, so he would like to write in the style of P4. However, he thought that his level of English writing was not good enough to write in such a style, so he said he

would have made many mistakes if he were to write in this style. Therefore, even though the informants said they would write in such a style, it did not mean that they were content with writing in HKE. As mentioned above, HKE was regarded by the informants as “grammatical mistakes”, which indicated that this variety was still viewed negatively.

5.6. The Differences in Social Functions of CMC Hong Kong English and Hong Kong English

Pang (2003), when discussing HKE as a variety, distinguished the notion of *localization* and *indigenization*:

By *localization*, I mean that a language variety develops its own characteristics in such aspects as phonology, syntax, lexis, and grammar... By *Indigenization*, I mean the acceptance by the local community of the existence of a local variety of a language in wide use in day-to-day communication (12)³⁰.

After exploring the informants’ attitudes towards both CHKE and HKE, it appears that these two varieties were not only different in form, but also in function. CHKE, being a major variety of communication on the internet, has an identity marking function. As discussed in section 3, the global-local dynamics could be shown in the language use of the internet users. In section 3, I suggested that, like “Greeklish” in Greek, and the hybrid forms of the Chinese languages in Taiwan, CHKE was a product of the dynamics between global and local identities³¹.

The response of the informants showed two important points to support this proposal. Firstly, because of the CHKE features, the informants recognised CHKE much better than HKE. In the interviews, only a few informants could recognise the features of HKE, and none of them recognised it as a variety. To the informants, HKE features in P3 and P4 were merely grammatical mistakes. In Pang’s (2003) words, HKE was localized, but not yet indigenized. Unlike HKE, CHKE was not only recognised by the informants, it was also deliberately used to show “Hongkong-ness” on the internet. This situation of CHKE would be similar to Peng’s *indigenization*, although CHKE was not used for “day-to-day communication”. This was because in the domain of the internet, CHKE was indeed for day-to-day communication, through internet instant messenger.

³⁰ These notions were similar to Kachru’s (1992: 56-57) four stages, in which localization was like stage 1 and stage 2, while indigenization was similar to stage 3 and 4.

³¹ For arguments to support this view point, please refer back to section 2.

Secondly, the informants viewed HKE not as positively as CHKE. From the responses of the informants, it could be observed that HKE was viewed negatively. It was considered to be bad usage, having wrong grammar and spelling mistakes. Putting this situation into Kachru's (1992) model³², HKE would be in between stage 1 and stage 2, because HKE was not recognised as a variety, yet Hong Kong People understood what "Chinese style English" denoted. This "Chinese style English", according to these people, was grammatically incorrect and had to be avoided (Mingpao 2004). According to my personal experience, if a Hong Kong Person was told that he/she was speaking or writing in "Hong Kong English", he/she would be very much offended, because to them it meant they were incapable of speaking/writing standard Englishes³³. Therefore, the situation of HKE would be in between stage 1 – non recognition of the non-native variety – and stage 2, in which telling people that they spoke such a non-native variety would be an "ego-cracking linguistic insult" (Kachru 1992: 57).

Different from HKE, the situation of CHKE would be similar to stage 3 of Kachru's model. In this stage, people started to accept it as a norm on the internet instant messenger. From the informants' response, one could see that the informants did not view CHKE negatively. Instead, this variety functioned as an unmarked language in computer-mediated communication between Hong Kong People. As subj-L had pointed out, on MSN Messenger, she would only use non-CHKE when she did not want to use CHKE, and subj-G said that CHKE was good for communication on ICQ/MSN.

So, it can be seen from these two points that CHKE is different from written HKE, not only in its form, but also in its function. The nature of CMC gives rise to CHKE, which is recognised by the Hong Kong People as a form of communication used by the Hong Kong People themselves, whereas HKE is less, and negatively, recognised. So CHKE has an identity function that HKE does not have. Therefore, the third hypothesis that "CMC Hong Kong English has a social function that other written forms of Hong Kong English do not have" is supported.

³² In stage 1, there was non-recognition of the variety. In stage 2, a formal characteristic of a non-native variety was developed, yet it was negatively perceived by the people who spoke it. In stage 3, people started to accept it as a local variety through different ways. In the final stage, there was recognition of the non-local varieties, and people used this for various social functions. At the last two stages, the variety was no longer negatively perceived.

³³ Standard Englishes usually mean RP (Received Pronunciation) or General American English.

With my second hypothesis³⁴ and third hypothesis supported, I would say that my first hypothesis, in which there are two varieties of written Hong Kong Englishes “CMC Hong Kong English” and Hong Kong English in other written forms”, is also supported.

However, one must not oversee the fact that, although CHKE is distinct from HKE, they are not unrelated. In fact, the recognition of CHKE may serve as a starting point to the appropriation of HKE. As I have already mentioned, on the internet, it was not only CHKE features that were seen. Some non-CHKE features were also apparent. As Pang (2003) pointed out, the use of English in ICQ saw “a form of appropriation of the language by the community” (16), the recognition and the appropriation of CHKE may eventually positively affect the attitudes towards other forms of written HKE, or even spoken HKE. This point, I believe, could serve as a starting point for further observation and research.

5.7. Limitations of the Study

One major limitation of this study was the number of informants. Although the results of the interview supported the hypotheses, it must be noted that this study was based only on 16 informants. Therefore, the figure might not be representative enough.

Also, as the interviews were conducted through internet instant messengers, between conversation turns there would be time lag, which made each interview longer than the expected 30 minutes. The prolonging of the interview sessions caused the informants to give hazy responses. This might have led to omissions of useful information, due to the lack of time allocated to ask the informants further questions. Despite the good points of using instant messengers for interviews (section 4.2.), this, method was another limitation of the study. Moreover, some messages could not be delivered due to certain technical flaws of the chat programmes, which contributed to some misunderstanding in communication, and thus prolonging the interview time.

³⁴ For detailed discussions please refer to section 3.6.

6. Conclusion

Hong Kong English has long been a variety recognised by scholars. With its history and development in the society, English in Hong Kong has not only affected the lives of the people in Hong Kong, it has also been affected by its speakers in the city. Hong Kong English, with its unique features, is a product of the society of Hong Kong.

Hong Kong English, however, is either not recognised by Hong Kong People, or is viewed negatively. Since the internet emerged into the lives of Hong Kong People, a new form of Hong Kong English, namely CMC Hong Kong English, has emerged, and it still continues to be widely used by the Hong Kong adolescents today in computer-mediated communication. Due to the unique nature of this method of communication, written Hong Kong English has new space to develop. It is believed that CMC Hong Kong English is performing an identity marking function, which is not possessed by non-CMC Hong Kong English.

In this study, 16 locally educated Hong Kong adolescents were interviewed. It was found that, while they tended not to notice Hong Kong English features, they recognised CMC Hong Kong English features, and they used it as an identity marker on the internet. With the difference in both forms and functions of CMC Hong Kong English, and Hong Kong English in other written forms, I argued that these two forms of Hong Kong English should be distinguished as two varieties.

Appendix A: The Passages for the Interviews

Presented below are the passages given to the informants for discussions. It is noted that CMC Hong Kong English features and Hong Kong English features are both in bold, while CMC Hong Kong English features are underlined as well. The italic words are the words deleted from the original texts, because these words are believed to be contextually Hong Kong, and they may affect the results of the interview. In the version given to the informants, no words are underlined, italicised or bold.

[PASSAGE ONE]

A: hehe ~ u know in Ø Uk , it snowed for 3 days from Monday to Wednesday ar !!

B: wa..gum mei ho leng law

A: hai ar ~ I took jor a lot of photos ar !! however , **during snowing** , the floor was so slippery and the temperature was so low lor ...

A: by the way , i **will come** back after 3 weeks jar !!!! haha ~ Sooo excited ar ~

B: waRRRRR~~~~~*****

B: so excited!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

B: hahahahha~~~

A: haha ~~~ What are we going to do then ?

B: wa~~~u like ar~~~

B: celebrate~~~~

B: u come back and celebrate bd r~~**

A: hai ar !!!~ Wow ~!! Can't wait **for it** ar !!!

A: i want to sing k la , go shopping la and **cut my hair** ar

B: hahahahaha~~

B: **cut ur hair**~~~here???

B: u wait jor gum long jui hai yiu hair cut ar????

A: gum the reason i come back not just cutting my hair gei ... but I really have waited for half year gar la

B: hhahahahahah~~~~half yr~~~~

B: wt do u want ar~?

A: u mean Ø hair style ar ?

B: yes ar~

A: i don't know bor ... **something looks nice** lor .. u know last Friday **in** the dance party , i curled my hair ar !! It looked so nice gar bor !!!

[PASSAGE TWO]

A: mind if we do the chat at 10pm *hkt*?

B: Oh that's okay. Maybe we should just leave it cos won't be able to chat for long... :S Cos will be doing something else later

A: how long u'll hv to go? If not gd maybe just do it now

B: Oh that's okay it's nothing important hahaha

B: Am here to say hi only la

A: but i hv loads to say le. haha :) maybe we do it now, for 20 mins?

B: Ohoh nono if you have something to do

A: noth u ok ma?

B: Oh haha I've just woken up la

A: ???

B: That means I'm okay la hahahha

A: okok, do it now

B: Let's chat later la :) You do your things first la

A: i just left everything & prep for the chat, now **u turn me down...**

B: !!

B: Oh but it's not good to leave everything **down** bor

A: becos i've just completed them

B: Can you still pick them up?

B: I thought it would be a long work

A: dun u ever **decide things** for me ok?

B: **Cos dunno ma!!**

[PASSAGE THREE]

First of all, the capacity of the call center was very insufficient at the beginning and the technology **is** far too primitive to be regarded as an online retailer. These **led** to **the** delayed logistics, ordering processing and inventory problems, and **the** most important, it broke the promise of the service that the order would be delivered **in hours**. Raising the minimum order size would just decrease the competitiveness **of itself** as one of the main **competitor**, *Park'n Shop*, was providing the delivery service to customers whose purchases exceeded HK\$150, which was the original minimum order size **of adM@rt**.

Internally, an on-going performance management system should be established to evaluate the **performances** of *adM@rt*; **at the** meanwhile, forecasting and reviewing the changes **of** external environment should also be practiced. **These data gathering actions** should align with the adjustment of the company's strategy, whenever the information indicates an amendment is needed. This could prevent *adM@rt* from committing **in** the wrong investments and keep the business effective.

Note: "adM@rt" was replaced by "the business" in the version for the informants.

[PASSAGE FOUR]

In 1981, more arcade games were released. Namco released Pac-Man, one of the most popular arcade games of all time. More than 100,000 units were sold in the US alone. Later, the video game market **continues** to expand rapidly and was dominated by big companies such as Nintendo and Sega until the 90s. In the mean time, more video **games** consoles (e.g. Super Nintendo, Game Boy and Sega Saturn) were developed, and **Classic** games such as Super Mario, Sonic the Hedgehog were released, while Capcom's Street Fighter brought new life to the arcades. The nature of video games **continues** to evolve. A series of different new consoles were launched and even wider **ranges** of games were available to the gamers in the modern era of **Ø** video game industry. The most successful game console launched during this period was **the** Sony PlayStation. In 1996, the sales of Sony PlayStation were said to top \$12 million per day through the Christmas shopping season and **holds** on to its worldwide place as the number one next generation game console. Sony's number one position **is** more firmly established when they launched **the** PlayStation 2 in 2000. The company sold 1 million consoles in just two days. Their only **closest** rival in the video game industry **is** the Xbox, which was developed by Microsoft and started challenging the huge dominance of Sony in 2002.

Appendix B – The Chat Logs of the Interviews

Present below are the chat log of the interviews of all the informants. The media through which the interview are conducted and the version of the text (i.e. the order of the passages in the text) are listed at the top of each chat log. It is noted that all names and email address related to the identities of the informants are replaced with the symbol X.

Informant A
Media: ICQ
Text Version A

Z: please acknowledge upon receipt la

A: ok

A: received

just read thru?

Z: yup please shall I give you 5 mins?

A: at least la, quite long ar~~~~;-)

Z: hahahaha thanks la

Z: please tell me when you finish la, just read it briefly it's okay

A: ok

A: OK la

A: finished

Z: brilliant!

Z: okay first question: do you understand the passages?

A: it's ok for 1, 2 and 4 but not very familiar with no.3

Z: which bits of 3 do you not understand?

A: sorry, what do you mean by "understand"?

Z: like do you understand what the authors were trying to say?

A: then should be ok ge

Z: okay good good

for passage one, can you describes the writers? who do you think they can be?

A: they are good friend, one in uk and one in hk

Z: describe more?

Z: pleeease? :-)

A: both can speak cantonese

A: around 17- 20 years old

Z: male or female?

A: both are girls

Z: what are their education level?

A: um high school

A: A's brithday is in spring

Z: why you think so??

A: maybe March~~~

A: haha, coz B said to celebrate A's "bd"

Z: aaah okay okay hahah. where do you think they come from?

A: Hong Kong

Z: why?

A: both are very familiar with Cantonese, but the style doesn't look like Chinese

Z: okay, if you have to rank them 1-10, 1 being not HK at all, and 10 being definately HK, how will you score the passage?

A: 9

Z: where does the remaining 1 go?

A: er... coz no solid evidence

Z: could the authors come from any other places like malasia/mainland china/taiwan or places like that?

A: must not be taiwan, only possible for Cantonese region of mainland, not malasia la, coz use a lot of "ar" rather than "la"

Z: how possible it is for them to be Cantonese region of mainland? v possible? or not very possible?

A: not very possible

A: this is just feeling

Z: okay yup! it's your feeling that I want to know :D

Z: what about passage two? Can you describe the authors (A and B) again?

A: they are also friend but not very good friend

Z: okay, what about their backgrounds?

A: they understand cantonese

A: university level

Z: anything else?

A: A should be at HK

Z: what about B?

A: B may not be

Z: where could he/she be?

Z: oh do you think they're guys or girls?

Z: or one guy one gal?

A: both are guys

A: B could be malaysia/ singaporean or chinese but may not be HK

Z: and the same question, if you are to rank them 1-10 on the same scale. what score will you give to the passage?

A: 7

Z: where has the 3 gone?

Z: I should ask why this score?

A: fewer "ar", "le", etc, ending sound, more difficult to guess

Z: so where could the authors come from if they were not from HK?

A: malaysia/ singaporean or chinese but may not be HK

Z: brilliant. And for passage 3?

Z: describe the author again please?

A: university level, studying business

Z: boy/ gal?

A: PM boy

Z: age?

A: around 21

Z: and where does he come from?

A: this one really no idea wow

Z: just use your gut feeling?

Z: or can give me a list of possibilities?

A: english should not be his mother language

Z: and then? where could he come from?

A: may be asian

Z: where more possible to be from??

A: Hong Kong, China, south east asia

Z: and what score will you give?

Z: from 1-10?

A: 5

Z: half and half you reckon?

A: could be 6 ge

Z: a bit more likely to be hong kong than other places?

A: i think it's must have lower score than passage 2 ma

Z: hahahahaha okay okay. How about 4?

Z: passage 4 I mean?

A: please describe the author again?

A: er... .high school, boy, under 20 year's old

Z: where could he come from?

A: this one more possible from HK ar, can be HK, south east asia

Z: oh why more possible to be from Hong Kong lei?

A: i can understand it easier

Z: so you reckon he's from Hong Kong rather than from places like europe/america/canada/Uk?

A: i don't think so

A: i don't think he is from europe/ america/ canada/ uk

Z: why not lei?

A: er... ... it's very easy to understand for me, so i think it's not written by western ppl

Z: hahahahaha okay okay. So western people's passage are generally more difficult to understand?

A: for me, yes~~~

A: PM :-P

Z: hahahahaha don't underestimate yourself la your English should be very good la

Z: okay. finally questions, for passage 1,2 3 and 4. Do you write this kind of texts?

A: thx~~~ anyway

A: ;-)

Z: so for passage 1-4 respectively, do you write these kinds of texts?

A: yes ar

Z: so you write all those kinds of texts? all?

A: similar style, but not the content

Z: aaah so for the style you will write in those 4 styles?

A: yes

Z: okay!! Brilliant!!

Any final comments on the 4 passages?

A: passage 1,2 are from msn, icq, etc

3 and 4 are home work

Z: good good :D brilliant brilliant!! That's all what I wanted to ask!!

Thanks so much for your precious time la!

Informant B
Media: ICQ
Text version A

Z: Hi this is Jenson's friend

Z: I supposed he had told you that I would be adding you :-) nice to meet you I'm vinton

B: Nice to meet u

Z: What's your name? :-)

B: 真名?
[*real name*]

Z: well English name? Your name won't be used in the paper don't worry :-)

B: XXXX

Z: brilliant nice to meet you, and thanks for helping me with the paper.

Z: What we'll do is to let you read a few passages and answer some questions, and hopefully it won't take more than 30 mins

B: 嗯
[*ok*]

Z: if it is okay for you?

B: ok~

Z: brilliant!! First we need some background info. you're guy aren't you? how old are you?

B: 19

Z: and are you in highschool or uni?

B: highschool

Z: what form are you in?

B: 7

Z: may I ask whether you're from a chinese medium school or english medium school?

B: EMI

Z: brilliant :-) let me send you a doc that contains the passages that you need to read?

B: OK

B: 唔好意思~ 唔記得關 Firewall.... 你等等先...
[*excuse me~ I forgot to close the firewall... please wait*]

Z: okay :-)

B: ok~

Z: hope it works this time

Z: hmmm I couldn't even get over to yours this time... :-(

Z: damn

Z: can I send it to your e-mail address instead?

B: ok~ XXXXX@yahoo.com.hk

Z: have done so please check your e-mail account

: -)

B: 篇 passage 係邊?
[where are the passages]

Z: damn! did I not attach it? Stupid me :-S

please hang on again

B: ok~:-[

Z: have sent it to you hope it works this time

: -)

Z: sorry for the trouble :S

B: nvm~

Z: have you got it?

B: 收到啦~
[I have got it~]

唔該晒~
[thank you~]

Z: brilliant :D Shall I give you 5 mins to go through it?

B: 最好啦~
[that would be the best~]

Z: Yup please take a brief look at the passages

: -) will give you 5 mins :-)

B: ok~

Z: Hi again, have you finished reading them?

B: 睇完啦
[I have finished reading]

Z: good good. Firstly, do you understand the passages?

B: 都明 ge

[*I think I do*]

Z: so you understand all of the passages? Like what the writers are trying to say?

B: 明 ge
[*yes I do*]

Z: good good. :-)

now for passage one, who do you think the authors of the text can be? Can you describe the authors?

B: 作者應該係香港後生仔
[*the author should be a teenager from Hong Kong*]

Z: yup please tell me more :-)

Z: describe it as much as you can

B: 作者唔會係一個識得拚寫正確廣東音 ge 人
[*the author is not a person who knows standard Cantonese pinyin*]

Z: yes yes? how old do you think the authors are?

B: 假設個作者唔係故意掩飾自己 ge 年齡 ge 話, 佢大概都係十六歲左右
[*If the author was not consciously veiling his real age, he/she should be about 16 years old*]

Z: both of them?

Z: or one of them?

B: 你指 ab?
[*you mean a & b?*]

Z: cos there're two authors in passage one aren't there?

Z: yup a and b

B: well
因為 a 同 b 我起初以為係文中 ge 2 個角色, 並非作者.....
[*because for a and b, I thought they were 2 characters in the passage and were not the authors*]

Z: Oh no no haha they're really two people.

Z: :-)

B: 如果佢地係作者 ge 話, 佢 2 個年齡應該唔會相距太遠
[*if they are the authors, their ages shouldn't be too different from each other*]

Z: both about 16 like what you've said?

B: 噃
[*yes*]

Z: kk, are they boys or girls? or one boy one girl you think?

B: a 係女, b 可能係男都可能係女
[*a is a girl, b can be a boy or a girl*]

- Z: what you think b could be? if you imagine?
will s/he be a boy or a gal?
- B: boy 啦
[boy la]
- Z: okay :-) What are their education level you think?
- B: form 4 度啦
[about form 4]
- Z: and where do the authors come from you think?
I mean which country?
- B: 中國
[China]
- Z: mainland china?
- B: ya
- Z: why do you think they come from the mainland?
- Z: why do you think they come from the mainland?
- B: 從 2 人 ge 對話可以睇得出佢地係用廣東話交談 ge, 因為好多字好似 "hai ar" 等都係從廣東音中掙出黎, 此外, 呢篇文我認為只有用廣東話 ge 概念先可以解讀到整篇文章, 因此可見呢篇文係由香港人寫 ge. 而香港係中國 ge 一部分, 好明顯佢地就係中國黎啦
[from the conversation between them it can be seen that they are using Cantonese to talk to each other, because a lot of words, for example "hai ar", are pinyin of Cantonese. Also, for this passage I believe one can only fully understand it by using the concepts of Cantonese. That's why it can be seen that this passage is written by Hong Kong People. Hong Kong is a part of China, so obviously they are from China]
- Z: aaah clever!
- Z: so what about passage two? Can you describe the authors again?
- B: 多謝
[thank you]
- Z: both A and B again?
- B: 應該都係美國人
[they should both be American]
- Z: how old could they be?
- B: 廿零三十度啦
[about twenty to thirty]
- Z: more specifically? early twenties or late twenties?
- B: 廿八啦
[twenty eight]
- Z: okay, why do you think they are americans?

- B: 因為我個美國人無事幹 ge 時候都會搵人陪佢吹水, (例如等開 meeting ge 時候) 而且佢地 d grammar 好唔英國.=
[because my American friends would chat to people when they had nothing to do (e.g. when waiting to go to meetings). Also their grammar is very not British]
- B: 等等
[wait]
好似都係中國人
[they should be Chinese]
- Z: aaah why you think they're chinese?
- Z: and if chinese? mainland chinese? HK chinese? taiwan chinese?
- B: 因為太多香港人成日講 ge 語氣助詞.= 即係 d "la" "ma" 咁.=
[because too many mood markers used by Hong Kong People. Mood markers means those "la" "ma" and etc.]
- Z: aaah so Hk chinese too?
- B: hk
- B: 係.=
[yes =.]
- Z: good good :D
- Z: okay what about passage 3 this time?
- B: 都係問作者?
[asking for the author as well?]
- Z: yup describe the author like you've done so for passage one and two
- B: 好難講.....
有可能係英國人.=
[It's hard to say]
[he/she could be British =.]
- Z: how old? education level? man/woman?
- B: 三十
[thirty]
大學
[university]
man
- Z: why from the UK you think?
- B: 等等.....
[wait...]
而家都係覺得佢好似 d 香港中學生 d 文.= 因為佢用 d 字眼都係香港學生常用.= 同埋我諗英國人應該唔會? Leaded gwa.=
[now I think it looks like an essay written by a Hong Kong secondary school student =. = because the words he/she uses are like those used by Hong Kong students =. = also I don't think British people would use "leaded" =.]

- Z: hahahaha after a second thought you reckon he's a secondary school student from Hong Kong?
- B: 係呀=. 因爲一見到篇文就令我諗起我個 fd=.
[yes =. = because when I saw the passage I thought of a friend of mine =.]
- Z: hahaha so please describe the authors again a bit please. :D
- Z: age/edu level/ gender/ where does the author come from?
- B: ok~ 真係唔好意思=.|||
[ok ~ please excuse me =. |||]
佢可能都係 d 十六歲 ge 香港中學生, form 4 度啦, 因爲佢 d 格式好似香港學生作 d 文咁,
跟足晒 d 格式=.
[he/she should be a 16 years old Hong Kong secondary school student, about form 4, because his
essay writing style was like the ones written by Hong Kong students, which follow the standard
style]
- Z: aaah okay no problem. :D then how about the last passage?
- Z: Oh before than do you think the author of 3 is a boy or a gal?
- B: gal=.
- Z: okay :D brill! What about the last passage then?
- B: 我好想講係 HK=. 不過我估係英國=.
[I wanted to say HK =. = but I guess it's British]
- Z: hahahaha why having this dilemma?
- B: 因爲呢篇野好難睇得出個作者 GE 性格=. 呢篇文章無性格=. 只不過係將 d 數據推出黎
ge=.
[because from the passage one can hardly see the character of the author =. = this passage has no
character =. = it is merely putting forward those statistics=. =]
- Z: aaah okay, so more likely to be from the UK than HK. How about age/gender/edu level?
- B: 男人, 三十歲, 大學
[man, 30 years old, university]
- Z: okay okay :D
- now, for passage one, if you have to give it a score from 1 to 10 (1 being definately not Hong Kong and 10 being extremely Hong Kong) what score will you give?
- B: 10
- Z: definately Hong Kong?
- B: 係=.
[yes =.]
- Z: good good :-D how about passage two?
- B: 假設佢唔係玩野 ge 話=.
[provided that he was not being cheeky =.]

- Z: why 7?
- B: 因為香港人好少會用呢個方法 liu 人傾偈=.
[because Hong Kong People rarely use this method to start a conversation]
- Z: how about passage 3?
- B: 6
- Z: again, why 6?
- B: 因為呢篇文似係學生寫, 而香港學生英文水平難以作到呢 D 文=.
[because this passage looks so much like an essay written by a student, and the English level of Hong Kong student can hardly write such an essay =.]
- Z: so where else could this guy come from?
- B: 香港
[Hong Kong]
- Z: can this passage be written by people from other places?
- Z: as you scored it 6, so it is possible for this guy to be not from Hong Kong. If not, where else could he come from?
- B: 台灣 gwa=唔知=.
[maybe Taiwan? =. = I don't know]
- Z: hahahaha no problem. This is not a test of your ability, I'm just asking your for your gut feelings :D
- Z: and now how about passage 4?
- B: haha~
4
- Z: again, why 4?
- B: 因為篇文章好完整, 都好 formal, 而且無咩大錯漏
[because the passage is very well structured, it is formal, and it doesn't have too many big mistakes]
- Z: so not very likely to be from Hong Kong?
- B: 噃
[yes]
- Z: where could he come from you reckon? if he's not from HK?
- B: uk
- Z: how likely that he's from the UK?
- B: 因為 d 英文都幾純
[because the English in the essay was quite pure]
- Z: And final questions. For passage one do you write this kinds of texts?

- B: 我唔寫呢類文的
[*I don't write in such a style*]
- Z: why not?
- B: 因為一來我認為都幾難令人睇得明
[*firstly, because I think it will be difficult to understand*]
二來易生誤會
[*secondly it is easy to cause misunderstanding*]
三來我唔係咁識廣東音拼法, 無謂獻醜
[*thirdly I don't know Cantonese pinyin, so I better not show my weakness*]
- Z: aaah and by the way, in which contexts you think those two people are writing?
- B: 篇篇都可以 gawo
[*all passages can be*]
- Z: which means? They can write this kind of things anywhere?
- B: like in essays? text books? studying? chatting?
- B: 係
[*yes*]
睇下係咩原因啦
[*see what is the reason for it*]
好似如果 pasage 1 係 for 人研究香港文化 ge, 出現係一篇 essay 入面都係有可能 ge
[*like passage 1 is for people who studies Hong Kong culture, it is possible to be an essay*]
- Z: you mean this passage can be quoted in an essay about HK culture?
- B: 唔係, 呢個只係其中一個例子 je
[*no, this is just one example*]
即係雖然篇文係描述緊 2 個人 ge 對話, 但篇文章本身係可以係任何地 ge
[*that means, although it is describing a conversation between 2 people, but the essay itself can appear anywhere*]
- Z: I get it now :-)

how about passage 2?
do you write these kind of text?
- B: no
- Z: why not?
- B: 無啦啦做咩事要加 d "la" "ma" 係句子後面.=好奇怪.=
[*why does one want to add those "la" "ma" after sentences =. = very strange =.*]
- Z: so you don't write these kinds of texts? Even for online chattings?
- B: icq 都係一時時
[*I only do it occasionally on icq*]
- Z: so you write these kind of text but not very often?
- B: 即係中文就會.=但如果我用英文同人傾偈 ge 話就甚少.=
[*Chinese I will =. = but if I use English to talk to people then rarely =.*]

Z: so you mean for chatting to HK ppl you'll use those but not to western people?

B: ya~

Z: aah kk. How about passage 3 do you write in such style?

B: 會
[yes]

Z: why?

Z: for what purpose?

B: 日常生活都會成日用到呢類文章
[I use this kind of passage for general stuff in life]

Z: how about passage 4? do you write in such style?

B: 通常都係做 report 交功課先會寫
[only when I do reports or homework]

Z: brilliant!!!

And any final comments on the passages?

B: 無咩=.=
[nothing really =.=]

Z: good good thanks so much for your precious time! It's really kind that you're willing to help :D

Z: and that's the end of it thanks SO MUCH!

B: 客氣~
[welcome~]

Informant C:
Media: ICQ
Text version A

C: yes

Z: brilliant!
okay the survey goes like this: I'll send you a couple of short passages and will ask you questions about them. :D

Z: Do you mind to give me your e-mail address so i can send you the passages?

C: XXXXXX@gmail.com

Z: yup have sent you the passage

Z: please check and see

C: ok

C: i just scan through it is ok?

Z: yup take a min to read it briefly

C: ok

Z: yup tell me when you're okay :D

C: ok

Z: brilliant. first question. Do you understand the texts?

C: um yes

Z: good good. okay for passage one, who do you think A and B could be? Please describe the authors?

C: it is a conversation in icq btw 2 friends who are talking in cantonese and studying abroad and it is winter~

Z: yup describe more about A and B themselves?

C: that is?

Z: like who do you think they are. How old they are. whether they're male and female. their education level?

C: i guess both of them are stuyding in community college and both of them are gals~

Z: how old approximately do you think they are?

C: um..i guess....18

Z: and where do they come from you think?

Z: helo still htere?

C: yep

i reply
18 years old~

C: u didn;t got it?

C: there?

C: hello~

Z: Oh hi

C: did u get my message?
18 years old?

Z: yup I got it, then I asked where you think the girls came from

Z: did you get the msg?

C: oops i didn't got that message
um.....whatever
from hk i guess

Z: on a scale of 1 to 10, how will you rank the texts? (1 being not HK at all and 10 being definately HK)?

C: 10

Z: so definately Hong Kong?

C: yep
definitely

Z: And can A and B come from other places? Like Malaysia? Mainland China? Taiwan?

C: nope as they do talk in a very hk style

Z: OKay what about the second passage? can you describe the authors (A and B) again?

Z: OKay what about the second passage? can you describe the authors (A and B) again?

C: um.....from hk
a kind of hk style
gender is hardly specify
age gp would be 15 -20

Z: guys/gals? or one guy one girl?

C: one guy one gal
b is the gal studying abroad
a is the guy

Z: why think so?

C: um....no reason
just intuition

Z: fair enough :) and from 1 - 10 again how will you rank the text?

Z: fair enough :) and from 1 - 10 again how will you rank the text?

C: 5

Z: half and half?

C: yep

Z: and if you think it's half and half, then where else do you think the author can come from? like malaysia/taiwan/mainland/europe...?

C: hk i guess

Z: then why only give it a 5?

Z: where has the other 5 gone?

C: because the text is half english and half canton-english

Z: okay I get what you mean, :-) how about passage 3? can you do the same? describe the authors?

C: i thought it is an a level practical paper done by a f.7 boy (hk)

Z: interesting! and how hong kong it is 1-10?

C: 7 i guess

Z: and could this text be written by someone other than HK people?

C: nope

Z: why not?

C: no reason.....just the structure looks too close to those alevel practical paper

Z: can it can't be produced by people from Taiwan or indonesia, for example?

C: i didn;t read there reading be4 so it's hard to tell

Z: aaah, fair enough :-) you reckon passage 3 is more Hong Kong than passage 2 in general?

C: um.....more or less the same

Z: so why one scores 5 and one 7?

C: um.....3 is 7 i would say

Z: yup and you scored passage two 5

C: yep

Z: so that's interesting. Cos you said in terms of being Hong Kong they were more or less the same, but you score one 7 and one 5. So would love to ask why do you think they're more or less the same but one score higher than the other.

C: yep because hk style is not just sth like 'mud/ma/la ' stuff but the context i know

C: but depends on the context i know

Z: so you thought the context of 3 is more hk than 2?

C: yep
confirmed

Z: brill!

Z: how about passage 4?

C: please describe the author.

C: i dun have passage 4...

Z: do you not?

C: checking

Z: how many pages does your doc. has? It should have 6 pages.

C: got it
hk also
like a kind of press release stuff

Z: a guy/a gal? edu level? age?

C: a gal
u -grad
studying marketing

Z: and how hong kong 1-10?

C: 6

Z: can it possibly written by someone who's not from HK?

C: um.....yes

Z: for example? from?

C: singapore

Z: how possible?

C: um.....i dunno

Z: but the possibilities still there?

C: yep

Z: okay, final questions, Do you write in the styles in passage one, if yes, where?

C: um....in icq chating with hk friends

Z: so you use it??

C: yep sometimes

Z: what about the style in passage two?

C: yep for all the passage i guess.....

C: it just depends on who i am talking to

Z: so when will you use the style in 2, 3 and 4?

C: 1 and 2 in lcq
3 is when i was having an exam
4 is working

Z: interesting interesting!

C: or in u paper

C: why

Z: thanks for your answers lei :D

Z: any final comments on the passages?

C: done?
ok
gotta sleep ttyl

C: um.....nth much

Z: thanks for your time la anyway it's v kind of you!!

Z: sorry for dragging for so long :(

Z: n sweet dreams :D

Informant D
Media: ICQ
Text Version B

Z: have sent it in your acct. please check :-)

D: ok hold on

D: i got it
then?

Z: brilliant, please read it briefly for 5 mins, and I'll starting asking you questions on your feelings about the passages.

Z: Have you finished reading them? :-)

D: yes for passage 1

Z: hahaha you just need to read them briefly la
:-) Shall I give you 5 more mins?

D: ok ok

Z: brilliant :-)

D: finished

Z: wonderful. :-)

Z: hmmm for passage one, can you describe who the writer could be?

D: are they wroten by different ppl?

Z: hmmm... yes they are. Do you understand the passage?

D: the writer is abit 克薄
[mean]

Z: yup yup, please describe more about passage one. just give me your feelings about the writer. :-)

D: ok ok
the writer is smart, can point out the problem at once, but no much suggestion

Z: yup do you think the author is male or female? how old could s/he be?

D: i think the author is female, and about 23-28

Z: what is her education level do you think?
Where does she come from you think?

D: tert level
but no idea in where she came from

Z: so she could come from anywhere you think?

D: any choice? or just pick one?

Z: that's okay if you're unsure :-)

D: i think she is from British

Z: okay :-D

D: And what about passage 2?

Z: please describe the authors again?

D: the author is male and the education level , is less than tert level and from asia , maybe from Taiwan

Z: why do you think the writer of passage one is from Britain and the second one is from taiwan?

Z: please tell me more

Z: helo?

D: in the first one, the author use much difficult words, and the senstence structure is abit complicated but the second one does not contain a difficult word, and the senstence is simple and straight forward, the main point is, this one contain no idea, just describe the fact

Z: aaah good observation :-)

Z: What about passage 3? please desribe the speakers (A and B) this time please

D: i am quite sure the authors are from HK, haha and their education level sure be the lowest amoung all 3 passagers, there are no contain in their speeches, especially the writer B, totally meaningless speeches

Z: aah what do you think their genders and ages can be? And why are you sure that they are from HK? Please elaborate

D: they are speaking English-Cantonese they are young , might be both are 13-15 and seems both are female

Z: what do you mean by English-Cantonese?

D: 用英文打的 cantonese, 拼音
[*Cantonese Pinyin typed in English*]

Z: good good. How about passage four? Please describe the writers again?

D: for writer A, male, from HK, graduated in secondary school. ro B, female ,from HK also, studying in university .

Z: why do you A is from secondary school?

Z: do you think

D: the contain again, A is lack of meaning in his speech

and for both, i found that there is a contradiction in their speeches

Z: really?! where is the contradiction?

D: not contradiction, it should be they can't hold their decision long always change their mind

Z: aaah okay okay.

Why are you so sure that they're both from Hong Kong?

D: they also said some English contanese

Z: good observation too. :-)

Z: So how Hong Kong do you think passage three is?

If 1 is not hong Kong at all and 10 is totally Hong Kong, what score will you give?

D: actually, passage 4 confused me i dun really understand wht they wanna say

Z: which bits do you not understand?

D: for passage 3, i think they are scored 9 almost totally Hong Kong

D: so if not totally Hong Kong, where else could they come from?

D: haha, they got 9 because i wanna keep it safe, nth is 100% sure maybe i should score them 10

Z: aaah fair enough. And how about passage 4?

D: score 10 also

Z: which bits of 4 do you not understand btw?

D: i dun know who wanna chat and who do not?

Z: so it's the meaning of the passage that you don't understand?

D: yes, very confused

Z: hahahahaha fair enough. Then if you have to give a score to passage one and two, what score will you give?

D: for 1, score 1
for 2, score 5

Z: so for 2 there's half a chance that the writer is from Hong Kong?

D: yes

D: it just like a composition in secondary school

Z: brilliant. And final questions, do you write in the style of passage 1?

Z: and why?

D: no, i dun think i have this english level

Z: and how about passage 2?

D: yes, i will write in that style

Z: passage 3?

D: i will write it in ICQ or MSN only

Z: and finally 4?

D: i dun think i will write that because it is hard for me to understand that

Z: hahahaha fair enough. Oh by the way why do you say you write in the style of passage 2?

D: it is formal and easy to write it can be used in many formal communication

Z: brilliant!! So that's the end of it. thanks a lot. Just want to make sure, you're uni student, male, 21?

D: asso. degree only male and 21

Z: that tertiary student too! :D Do you come from English medium school or Chinese meduim school in secondary school?

Z: I need this infomation too.

D: EMI

Z: Brilliant!! That's the end of the whole interview!! Thanks so much for taking part!!

Informant E:
Media: ICQ
Text version B

- Z: Hey!
- Z: helo this is XXXXX's friend
- E: nice to meet u!
- Z: nice to meet you too!
- Z: Can you spare like 30 mins time to do a survey for me?
- Z: All you'll have to do is to read four short paragraphs, then answer some questions using your feelings towards the texts.
- E: no prob
but is it urgent?
i got to hv a nath now
- Z: That's okay will you come back after the shower?
- E: and if you can do it after the shower, can I send you the passages through email first?
- Z: can I have you email address?
- E: actually u can send me right now
i won't turn off my pc
my email: XXXXXXXXXXXX@yahoo.com.hk
- Z: okay, I'll send you the passages, and please tell me after the shower when you're ready. I actually need to take a shower too :-)
- E: will talk to you soon
- E: okay
i'll try my best to answer
see ya
- Z: hi there if you've finished your bath pls
leave a msg here :-)
- E: plx send now
- Z: yup have sent you the doc. in your e-mail. please check :)
- E: thx tell u when i fin^^
- Z: good good, all you have to do is to read it briefly :-)
- E: ok
plx wait!
- Z: have you finished reading them?
- Z: Just need to read it briefly :-)

E: still scanning
a moment plx^^

Z: okok :)

E: may i ask once more.....
what should i ans??

Z: I'll ask you questions online if you don't mind :-)

Z: can we start now :-)

E: no.....
it's though if i don't know the
question.....

Z: don't worry, there's no correct/wring answers.

Z: And they are easy questions. :-)

E: then...plx give mesome more time.

Z: Cos I'll be interviewing you online though ICQ. :-)

E: kay now!

Z: brilliant!

E: start now!

Z: First I need to know your background info

how old are you? What is your education level?

Z: you're female aren't you?

E: i'm now 20 and i'm having a high dip course in ive

E: ofcox not did u see my info!?!?

Z: you're male?

Z: sorry!!

Z: you went to an English medium school?

E: u mean in secondary school?? yes i'm

Z: good good, for passage one, who do you think the writer can be? Please describe the writer?

E: i think.....the writer is someone who's investigating the system andcan provide
professional suggestion.....
sorry my english's suck=.=""

E: that's okay :-) All I need to know is your feeling

Z: is the writer a guy or a gal?

Z: How old do you think he or she is

E: i think the writer's aabout 30-yr old male just feeling.....cox there's a word "online"

Z: that's okay it's feelings that I need :-)

what is his education level?

E: i think.....at least graduated degree

Z: where do you think he comes from?

E: u mean.....country???

Z: yupyup :-)

E: i think.....the writer's an English cox of the word "center"

Z: From the UK?

E: probably
that's my first impression

Z: good good!!
How about passage two?

E: i 'm keen on reading it
cox i like video games very much

Z: good good please tell me about the writer.

E: it's quite tough.....=.=""

i think the writer should be a male.....about 25-yr old

Z: what is his education level? And where does he come from?

E: should beabove college level
i think he 's from us just becox he's mentioned it.....

Z: Oh did he mention he's from the US?

E: no.....actually i have no idea.....
but as he mentioned More than 100,000 units were sold in the US alone i can't think of others

Z: aah fair enough. :-)
How about passage 3?

Z: can you describe the background of A and B?

E: A's living in UK
and B's in HK

Z: yupyup :-) anymore? how old are they? what are their genders? what are their education level?

E: A's girl
and B's a boy.....
both are college student

about 16-7 yrs old

Z: where do they come from?

E: both are hk
cox the english's.....obviously hk icq eng.....

Z: aaah good good. What about passage 4?

Z: Where do the people (A and B) come from??

E: i thinkA's in hk
and B's in us
cox B said he's just woke up
both are 20+

Z: fair enough, so B is a gwailo?

E: oh no B is from hk too

Z: okay okay let's get to this: If you have to score 1-10 for passage 4 (1 being totally not HK and 10 being totally HK), how will you score it?

E: u mean score for what??
grammar or.....??

Z: yup, score it by thinking "how Hong Kong it is?"

E: sorry but i don't understand what do u mean by "how Hong Kong it is"???

Z: How culturally Hong Kong is it shall I put it tis way?

Z: let's put it in Chinese

Z: 這究竟有幾香港呢
[for this *how Hong Kong this is?*]

E: 完全香港.....=.="" 10
[*totally Hong Kong..... =.="" 10*]

Z: how about passage 3?

E: that's native hk 2!

Z: so wha score?

E: more than ten ^^b

Z: hashahha how about passage 2?

Z: how hong kong is it?

E: PM passage 2.....
not very hk at all

Z: what score?

E: 3 or 4 then

Z: and finally passage one?

E: i think 2 for passge 1

Z: finally do you write in the styles of the 4 passages?

E: yes
1 n 2 in homewrok.
3 n 4 in icq ^^

Z: good good thanks so much for your help!!

Z: Brilliant!! thanks so much!!

E: u'r welcome
i'm glad to help u

Z: thanks so so much again!

Informant F
Media: ICQ
Text version A

- Z: I'm wondering if you can help me, spend a bit of time answering some questions through ICQ?
- F: okok
plz ans
- Z: This questions will be used as data for my masters dissertation.
- F: i know
XXXXXX told me just now
- Z: first of all I'll need to send you 4 short paragraphs. Do you have an email address to which I can send you the document?
- F: XXXXXXXXXXXX@yahoo.com.hk
- Z: please hold on a sec :-)
- F: m
- Z: Yup the passages have been sent to your email, please check :-)
- Z: Meanwhile, can I ask you for some backgroud infomation?
- F: okok
- Z: what's your gender? age? what and where are you studying now? and was your secondary school English medium or Chinese medium?
- Z: what's your gender? age? what and where are you studying now? and was your secondary school English medium or Chinese medium?
- F: M,20
study at the same school with XXXXX
secondary school is english medium
- Z: good good :-) have you recieved the passage?
- F: ys
watching now
- Z: brilliant, shall I give you 3-5 mins to read it? All you need to do is to read it briefly and to answer questions
- F: fjust c all then u ask me some Q?
- Z: yup, scanning them very briefly will be fine
:-)
- F: finish
- Z: brilliant!
- Z: For passage1, please describe who you think A and B are.

F: mmm
they are both hk citizens who study in UK

Z: a good start :-) How old do you think they are>

F: 15-18

Z: and do you think they guys or girls? and what education level are they at you think?

F: both of them are boys and they only hv F5 lv

Z: and why do you think they're HK citizens?

F: because thier conversation is full of cantonese word
this is hk english style

Z: aaah good good. How about passage two? Please describe A and B again? Tell me their genders, education level, age, and where you think they come from?

F: i think all just the same as passage 1

F: maybe thier education lv is lower

Z: and why do you think their education level is lower? And why, again, do you think they're from HK?

F: nono
is higher
because their eng is better than the first 1

F: and they come from hk also

Z: why do you think they're from HK also?

F: they still hv la,bor those word

Z: aaah, do you think A&B in both passage can come from places other than HK?

F: mmm
i think A must be come from hk

Z: A in which passage?

F: SOrry
passage A

Z: aaah kk, what about B? and A&B in passage 2?

F: sorry
u mean A,B are the same person in passage 1 and 2?

Z: Oh no, sorry. I was asking whether these 4 people (they might not be the same people) can be people other than Hong Kong People. Is there any possibility that they come from other countries?

F: my icq hand

Z: sorry what do you mean?

F: icq hang
can't c what u type b4

Z: Oh that's okay:
I was asking whether these 4 people (they might not be the same people) can be people other than Hong Kong People. Is there any possibility that they come from other countries?

F: passage 1,ab must be come from hk passage2 may be not

Z: where could A&B from passage 2 come from?

F: If they were not from HK? And is the possibility big?

F: haha
80% is

Z: hahaha and if they were not from HK, where could they come from?

F: but i can't predict

Z: that's okay. :-) How about passage three?
Please tell me the author's gender, education level, and the place s/he comes from, according to your feeling?

F: mmm
gender is difficult to guess
and the education lv is degree or above

Z: where where do you think the author comes from?

F: maybe come from usa or uk

Z: why think so?

F: mmm
the passage makes sense
and with supporting reason

F: it looks like passage from newspaper

Z: aaah good good :-)
And how about passage 4? Please describe the author again?

F: author is boy and he came from some developed cities his education lv is also degree

Z: what developed cities do you think he's from?

F: europe

Z: which country to be specific if you have to make a guess? And why?

F: UK
because this 1 is an luxury gd

Z: hahaha okay okay. :-)

FOr passage one again, if 1 is totally not Hong Kong, and 10 is complete Hong Kong, what score will you give between 1 and 10?

F: 10

Z: completely Hong kong?

F: ys

Z: how about passage 2? And why?

F: 8 la their englsih is not bad

Z: passage 3 and why?

F: 5
their english lv is gd

Z: last but not least, passage 4, and why?

F: same reason

Z: and what's the score?

F: 5

Z: so you think the worse the ENGLISH is, the more Hong Kong it is?

F: no
just the passage 1 and 2 law,boe those word give me the first impression that they came from hk

Z: aaah okay okay.

finally, do you write in the style of 1 and 2? and where will you write in such style if you do?

F: mainly in icq only

Z: and how about the style in 3 and 4? do you write in such style? And where do you write if yes?

F: just write in hw and exam only

Z: brilliant. And last question, do you understand all of the passages?

F: the first 1 need to use more time to understand the others is ok

Z: why did the first 1 take you longer?

Z: which bit did you find difficult understanding?

F: chinese English need to think them back to chinese word

Z: fair enough :-) Brilliant. Thanks for your participation. that's the end of the interview :D Thanks loads!!

Informant G:
Media: MSN Messenger
Text version B

G: HI!!I'm XXXXXX's brother

Z: Brilliant!

G: pls start

Z: okay i'll first send you 4 short passages

Z: you read them and answer my questions online. If it's okay?

G: ok

Z: good good let me send you the texts

Z: good good shall I give you 5 mins to read it breifly?

G: hold on

Z: ok

Z: all you need to do is to read it briefly, and answer my questions by your feelings

Z: Oh meanwhile, can you give me some info?

How old are you?

G: 19

Z: and you went to an EMI school and you are a form 7 graduate aren't you?

G: yes

Z: good good, pls tell me when you finish reading the passages

G: yes

G: i've fininshed reading

Z: Brill! a very quick reader you are

Z: for all the passages, do you understand all of the texts?

G: mostof them

Z: which bits do you not understand?

G: sorry finished one only

Z: okay, do you want to read rest of the texts first?

G: a few more mins pls

Z: kk take yr time

G: i've finished reading

Z: good good, so, again, do you understand all of the texts?

G: i do not understand some sentences in passage4

Z: let's see, which bits do you not understand?

G: 'Am here to say hi only la'

Z: which bits of this sentence do you have doubt with?

G: now i can guest its meaning, but i think it's strange at my first sight

Z: okay okay. So is there anything else that we have doubt with?

G: no

Z: good good. Okay, let's start with passage 1.

Who do you think the author of this passage is? Can you describe who you think the author is?

G: The CEO of a company

Z: why say so?

G: He is analysing the competitiveness of the industry and suggeded that a new management system is needed

Z: how old do you think the author is? Is s/he a man or a woman? and which country do you think s/he comes from?

G: about 40yrs old, man from US

Z: and what is his education level?

G: , may have MBA degree

Z: good good.

G: how about passage two?

Z: can you describe the author again?

G: reporter which responsible for a project about games

Z: and how old? gender? nationality? and education level?

G: twenty something, japanese, undergraduates

Z: why do you think he's japanese?

G: because games are popular in japan, so he know more about games

Z: aaah, do you think English is his second language?

G: yes

Z: why say so?

G: The passage is similar to those written by Hong Kong people

Z: really? In which ways? Can you tell me more?

G: I think the passage is easy to read

Z: so the easier for you to read, the more HK it is?

G: not exactly, but its similar to those written by my classmates

Z: aaah

Z: okay

Z: what is the style of your classmate's writing?

G: simple, little mistakes

Z: okay okay good good.

Z: how about passage three?

Z: can you describe the authors (A and B) agian?

Z: their genders? Edu levels? how old?

Z: where they come from?

G: Two hk ppl, undergrad, 20yrs, male

Z: why do you think they come from HK?

G: they are speaking in chinglish

Z: for exmaple?

G: 'wa u like ar'

Z: okay okay

Z: Finally passage 4

Z: describe the authors A and B again pls

Z: genders, age, edu level, nationality

G: two HK ppl, male, 20yrs, undergrad, one is overseas

Z: again, why do you think they come from HK?

Z: I mean why do you think they are HK ppl?

G: they say OF COURSE DUNNO la

Z: hahahahaha okay okay

Z: for passage 4

Z: if 1 is definately not Hong Kong, and 10 is completely Hong Kong, what will you score it from 1 to 10?

G: 7

Z: why 7? Is there any possibility that the A and B are from any other places?

G: maybe ABC

Z: okay how about passage 3? how will you score it?

G: 10

Z: definately HK?

G: yes

Z: passage 2?

G: 5

Z: halfly Hong Kong? Why?

G: maybe japinese, maybe my classmates

Z: hahahahahahah how about passage 1?

G: 2, not likely

Z: little possibility?

G: yes

Z: okay, do you write in the style of passage 4?

G: no, mostly passage 1 or 2, but with many mistakes

Z: so do you not write in passage 3 and 4 at all?

G: no, it's terrible

Z: do you not use it when chatting to friends in MSN/ICQ?

G: I may have it in a few days

Z: so according to you, can I say that the more Hong Kong the style is, the more terrible it is?

G: true for typical Hk ppl

Z: I don't get this, can you explain?

G: difficult to explain

Z: try try please

Z: cos your info is important to me

G: at least some ppl in HK use queens english, but most write in CANTONESE +ENGLISH

Z: and you think CANTONESE + ENGLISH is something bad?

G: most of the time

Z: and in which time is not bad?

Z: if you said most of the time?

G: make us laugh

Z: hahahahaha what about on ICQ/MSN? If people use Chinglish, do you think it's bad?

G: no, just for communication

Z: so when it's just for communication it's okay to use Chinglish?

G: yes

Z: what about when writing a newspaper article? It's just for communication, so it's okay to use Chinglish?

G: No, children will learn wrong English

Z: so if you had the power, would you choose to stop people from use Chinglish in ICQ/MSN?

G: no, it's convenient

Z: Okay so that's the end of the interview thanks a lot!!!

Informant H
Media: MSN Messenger
Text version A

Z: Please take a look at the passages

H: ok

H: all passages

H: right ??

Z: yup

Z: read them briefly please

H: okok, wait

H: ok lar

Z: kk

Z: do you understand the texts?

H: understand

Z: good good

Z: for passage one

Z: can you describe who you think the author is?

H: u mean A or B??

Z: A and B yes

H: B

Z: Nono sorry

Z: I mean please describe the authors (A and B)

Z: who do you think they are

Z: like their age

Z: genders

Z: edu level

Z: and where they come from

Z: from

H: both female

H: from Hong Kong

H: A studies in UK

H: university level

H: both uni level

H: still studying bachelor

Z: good good, why do you think they are from HK?

H: those lor ar la

Z: okokay

Z: how about passage 2?

Z: describe the authors again pls

H: i think it's the same

H: female, uni level, from Hong Kong

Z: and why again from HK?

H: becoz those "ma" "la"

Z: and passage 3?

Z: please do the same to passage 3?

H: uni level, male,

Z: how old?

H: 20-24

H: age range ok ??

Z: that's okay

Z: and where does he come from you reckon?

H: i have no idea about his origin

Z: why not?

H: hard..... i dun find any solid evidence to confirm it

Z: where could he possibly come from in that case?

Z: or is there anything that you are sure? concerning his origin?

H: i think he is westerner

Z: why think so?

H: wild guess

Z: so really no evidence knowing where this guy comes from?

H: no evidence at all

Z: okay okay

Z: how about passage 4

Z: please describe the author again

H: sophisticated, professional, like a magazine paragraph,

H: male, 30+ old

Z: and where does he come from, again?

H: from the US

H: hahaha

Z: hahahahahaha why?

H: the use of words and the writing style

H: like NY times ar

H: hahaha

Z: wow hahaha

Z: fair enough

Z: okay

Z: if 1 is completely non-Hong Kong, and 10 is totally Hong Kong, what score will you give passage 1 (1-10)?

Z: and why?

H: 10

H: the wordings are Hong Kong totally

Z: so it is not possible that A and B are from places other than HK?

H: not possible

Z: how about the score of passage 2? and why?

H: 8, less Hong Kong than passage 1

H: but still quite Hong Kong

Z: so could they possibly come from other places/

Z: ?

H: still not possible

Z: but why only 8 then?

H: becoz i compare it to passage 1

Z: aaah okay. And why is it less HK than passage 1?

H: less ar, bor, lar, etc

Z: aaah how about passage 3 then?

Z: and, of course, why.

H: 4 lar,

H: becoz i have no idea whether the author is from Hong Kong or not

H: but wild guess he is westerner, so i give a 4

Z: kk and finally how about passage 4? and why?

H: 2 only,

H: too sophisticated

H: but still a little chance the author is from Hong Kong, so a 2 is fair lar

Z: so the more sophisticated it is, the less chance that the author is from HK?

H: hai gua
[maybe yes]

H: haha

Z: why? Hong Kong people's English are not sophisticated?

H: less sophisticated and organized lor

Z: interesting interesting.

Z: Do you write in the style of passage 1 or 2?

H: i think i can write passage 3 gei

H: hahaha

H: but in msn or icq or email with friends then in 1 or 2 lar

H: ahahaha

H: like the words i use now

H: haha

Z: hahaha what about passage 4?

Z: do you write in such style?

- H: if i take it seriously, i think i can write a passage close to passage 4, but will have several errors
gua
- H: i mean i can organize and present sophisticated ideas, but the wordings are not that good
- Z: okay okay. And finally do you have any comments on the passages?
- H: no further comment

Informant I
Media: MSN Messenger
Text version B

Z: Do you want to take five mins to take a look at the texts?

I: haha.....yup!

Z: brilliant. While you're readint the text please tell me your

1. AGE
2. EDUCATION LEVEL
3. Chinese-medium or English-medium?

I: 1) 18

Z: leo?

Z: helo? still there?

I: yup!!!!

Z: Good good how about your education level and "Chinese/English medium"?

I: F.5

I: wht is "Chinese/English medium"?

Z: em... whether you went to a Chinese medium secondary school or English medium school?

I: English medium school

Z: good good. Have you finished reading the passages?

I: is it the first 2 passages?

Z: emmm there're 4 passages.

I: o.....so can u give me a few seconds?

Z: yup tell me when you've finished it

I: ok....

I: i hv finished

Z: Brilliant.

Z: First of all, do you understand the texts?

I: honestly...not really! hehe~

Z: which bits do you not understand?

I: um.....may be the 1st one

Z: which part of the first one do you not understand?

Z: what made you confused?

I: um.....i am not sure wht the passage abt.....is it abt technology?

Z: that's okay if you don't understand it totally. Cos all you need to do is to answer my questions using your feelings towards the passaaages.

HOW about passae 2, 3 and 4? Are they okay?

I: yup~

Z: good good!

Z: okay, for passage one.

Z: who do you think the author could be? Please describe the author of the passage.

Z: helo?

I: yup...i am thinking.....

Z: hahaha

I: any tips?

Z: just answer it according to your feelings.

Z: THere's not correct answer

Z: no correct answers

Z: Do you think s/he is a man/woman?

I: a man

Z: how old do you think he is?

I: um...middle-aged

Z: what is his education level?

I: um...may be a professor....hehe

Z: good good

Z: Where do you think he comes from?

Z: what nationality he is?

Z: what is his nationality?

I: um.....britain????because you are studying in britain....

Z: hahahaha all you need to do is to guess by his writing

Z: Okay how about passage 2?

Z: What is the author's

1) gender
 2) age
 3) education level
 4) nationality?

I: 1) man
 2) i think he is twenty something...younger than the 1st author
 3) an university student
 4) USA

Z: why do you think he's from the USA?

I: or may be japan / hk! because usa japan hk are popular in playing tv games....hehe

Z: So do you think English is his first language or second language?

I: um.....may be 1st~

Z: but people from japan and hk are not native speakers of English.

I: may be he is MIX!

Z: hahahaha

Z: fair enough.

Z: :-)

Z: Okay how about passage 3

I: some questions?

I: same

Z: please tell me A, and B's

1) genders
 2) ages
 3) Education level
 4) nationality

I: A .
 1) man
 2) twenty
 3) going to university
 4) hk

B
 same as A!

Z: aaah why do you think A and B are from HK?

I: i think A is like u.....a hk student go to UK for his further studies.... and B is A friend....but he is stay in HK!

Z: yup you're quite right. Why do you think they're from HK?

I: cos of their conversation!

Z: which bits of conversation tells you they're from HK?

I: whole passagetheir english are not well enough.....esp B's reply!

Z: how is their English not well?

I: for example.....A's reply...[hai ar ~ I took jor a lot of photos ar !!] JOR AND AR....i think most of the hk student like to reply their friends this way.....

Z: good good clever you!

Z: How about passage 4?

Z: for A and B again

Z: their

1) age
2) gender
3) education level
4) nationality

I: A
1) twenty or below...
2) girl

I: 3) secondary
4) hk

Z: yupyup how about B?

I: B
1) same as A
2) MAN
3) may be going to university
4) hk

Z: again, why do you think they're from HK

Z: ?

I: um....same as passage 3

Z: and which part do you think give it out? can you give me some examples?

I: for example,A's reply [noth u ok ma?]
B's reply[Cos dunno ma!!]

Z: which parts of these two sentences are Hong Kong?

Z: helo?

I: yup.....for example ..DUNNO AND MA!!!!these are the words that the hk students like to use~

Z: good good, very clever of you

Z: okay, for passage 1 then. If 1 is completely not Hong Kong, and 10 is totally Hong Kong.

What score will you give to passage 1?

Z: from 1-10?

Z: helo?

Z: you still there?

I: yup...thinking

Z: just give me your impression

I: may be 5

Z: why 5?

Z: half and half?

I: haha...yup.....half and half...much fair!

Z: hahahaha

Z: how about passage 2?

I: um....abt 7.5

Z: why?

I: because hk like to play tv games....so i give higher marks...

Z: okay okay how about passage 3?

I: passage 3 and 4 are 10 !

Z: why?

I: because of their conversation!

Z: hahahaha what do you mean?? the meaning of the conversation? or the words they use in the conversation?

I: the words.....

Z: good good Finally do you write in the style of passage 3 and 4?

I: no~

Z: why not?

I: um....because i scare it will affect my wrting skills

Z: aah so you don't even write in those styles on MSN?

Z: helo helo?

I: um.....sometimes....but not always

Z: okay how about the writing styles of 1 and 2?

Z: do you write in those styles?

Z: and why?

I: of course....because i need to hand in my english homework!

Z: hahahahahahahahahahaha very good very good

Z: hey thanks for your help with the interview!

Z: That's the end of it.

Z: Do you have any final comments on the passages?

I: haha.....welcome~

I: um....quite interesting for the last 2 passages!

Z: how interesting?

Z: in which way it is interesting?

I: the words of the conversation

Z: hahahaha why do you think they're interesting?

I: may be i won't use that kind of words

Z: hahahahahahaha good good thanks thanks!

Informant J
Media MSN Messenger
Text version A

- Z: okok can you do an interview for me? You'll be sent 4 passages
- J: Alright
- Z: all you need to do is to read them briefly and answer my questions by your feelings.
- Z: good good. do you want to take a brief look?
- J: what should I do now?
- Z: oh please read them briefly
- Z: and after reading them, answer my questions online
- Z: and meanwhile can you tell me your age, gender, education level, and whether you went to an emi or cmi school
- J: I am 22, female, U grad, EMI school
- Z: please take a brief look at the passage.
- Z: passages
- J: finished
- Z: good good, before we start you understand all of the passages?
- J: I read it very briefly
- J: Should I read it more carefully?
- J: and attentively?
- Z: that's okay, as long as you don't have anything you find difficult to understand
- J: okok
- Z: good good
- Z: first for passage one
- Z: tell me the who you think A and B are
- Z: tell me their ages, genders, education levels, and nationality
- Z: s
- J: 18 years old, A is F and B is M, High School students, Hongkongers.
- Z: why do you think they're Hongkongers?
- J: B used a lot of pin-yin for Cantonese.
- J: and the 'ar'

Z: okay okay

Z: how about passage 2

Z: can you do the same to A and B?

Z: oh anymore on passage 1?

J: 'lar' 'jor' 'lor' 'hai ar' 'gei' 'bor'

Z: good good

Z: then let's go onto passage 2

Z: can you do the same to A and B?

J: around 20, U students, A and B are M (B is probably gay for his attentiveness), Hongkongers

Z: and again, why do you think they're Hongkoners?

J: 'la' 'le' 'ma'

Z: so it's the wordings they use?

J: yes

Z: then how about passage 3?

J: no no

Z: who do you think the author is?

J: I think only Hongkongers use 'hahahahah';

Z: hahahahahahaha interesting interesting!!

how about the author of P3?
his/her age gender edu level and nationality?

J: p3 gender?

Z: the author of p3

Z: gender, age, education level and nationality

J: male, above 23, U grad and Chinese

Z: why do you think he's chinese

Z: ?

J: There are some grammatical mistakes which should not have been made by native speakers

Z: so your guess is that he's from China?

J: if Hong Kong is part of China, then yes

Z: so you guess he's from Hong Kong?

J: um...it's a tough question

J: yes, HK then

Z: why is it more difficult to decide whether the author is from HK, comparing to A and B in P3 and p4?

J: Because the author of P3 didn't use any Cantonese *inflections

Z: and how about passage 4?

Z: can you tell me the gender the age the edu level and the nationality of the author?

J: Male, above 23, U grad, American

Z: why do u think he's american?

J: just because of the style. : p

J: it looks professional

Z: do you think he's a native spaker of eng?

J: yes

J: I think Americans use the word 'arcade' more often

J: just my feeling

Z: good good

Z: scoring time

Z: if 1 is totally not hong kong and 10 is completely Hong Kong, what score will you give to passage 1 in term of the style of the passage?

J: 10

Z: why?

J: wa..gum mei ho leng law

J: B: u wait jor gum long jui hai yiu hair cut ar????

Z: how abt p2?

Z: what score and why/.

J: Actually, I think P2 is also 10

J: I don't understand actually

J: but if I really have to give a lower mark, I think 7 for p2

Z: oh you don't have to give a lower mark

Z: if it's 10 it's 10

J: 10 then

Z: how about p3?

J: p3 I think 2

J: p4 1

Z: why do you give such low marks for p3 and p4??

J: because I don't see colloquial Cantonese in them

Z: good good

Z: finally do you write in the style of p1 or p2?

J: occasionally

Z: in which occasions?

J: when talking with friends

J: esp those who actually understand English

Z: orally?

Z: face to face conversations?

J: so they know what I am doing actually. Otherwise, they can't appreciate the style

J: Never

Z: so when you said talking with friends what did you mean?

J: verbally

Z: if not face to face conversation

J: sorry, written

Z: written conversation?

J: yup

J: ICQ, MSN or E-mails

Z: Okay okay

Z: and how about the styles of p3 or p4

Z: ?

Z: do you write in such styles?

J: at work

Z: good godo

Z: that's the end of it!!

Z: thanks dear

Z: any final comments?

J: um....it's really difficult to tell the gender of the speakers or writers.

Z: how about telling the nationalities of the writers?

J: not difficult at all for P1 and P2,

J: quite difficult for P3 and very difficult for P4

Z: interesting interesting!!

Z: thanks so much it's very useful for my dissertation

Informant K
Media: MSN Messenger
Text version B

Z: do you want to take a brief look at it?

K: 我睇下先
[*let me see*]

Z: And meanwhile, please tell me:

Your age, edu level, whether you went to an emi/cmi secondary school la

K: 19

K: university year2

K: emi

Z: good good have your bro told you what approximately you'll do in the interview?

K: 無呀
[*no*]

Z: okay basically, you'll take a brief look at these four passages, and answer my questions according to how you feel

Z: so please take a brief look and tell me when you finish

K: 好呀~我睇梗passage 4
[*okay~ I'm reading passage 4*]

Z: brilliant. take your time

K: 我睇完lar~
[*I've finished reading~*]

Z: good good

Z: First of all, do you understand all of the texts?

K: 一部份la
[*a part of them*]

Z: what don't you understand?

K: 大概意思都明白
[*I understand the approximate meaning*]

Z: so is there any bits that you don't understand?

K: SORRY

Z: that's okay

Z: So is there any bits that you don't understand?

K: 我諗無問題

[I don't think there's any problem]

Z: good good.

Z: then let's go on

Who do you think the author of passage 1 is? Please describe the author

K: 我覺得係一個讀business 既人
[I think it is a person who studies business]

Z: do you think he's a guy or a gal?

Z: how old do you think s/he is?

K: guy

K: 唔.....about 30
[hmm... about 30]

Z: what is his education level you reckon?

K: master

Z: understand masters level?

K: yup~

K: 碩士
[masters]

Z: where do you think he comes from?

Z: his origin/nationality?

K: hong kong

Z: why do you think he's from Hong Kong

Z: ?

K: 直覺ga jor
[It's only my intuition]

Z: aaah okay

Z: Will come back to this

Z: how about passage 2?

Z: please do the same, thinking who you think the author is

K: 一個研究culture 既人
[A person who's studying culture]

K: guy about 40

K: amercian

Z: why do you think he's from america?

K: 我見佢提及usa
[*I saw him mentioning usa*]

Z: aaah so do you think he's a native speaker of English?

K: yup

Z: kk how about passage three, please guess the identities of A and B in the same way

K: 佢地既關係??
[*their relationship??*]

Z: em... nono, their gender, age, and orgin respectively

K: a同b 都係girl, about 16
[*both a and b are girls and about 16*]

K: hong kong.

K: 兩個都係
[*both of them are*]

Z: why do you think they're from Hong Kong?

K: 佢地用既溝通方式
[*the way in which theyr communicate*]

Z: can you express it in more details?

K: 文字英文拼音, e.g. leng for 靚
[*words that use English for pinyin, e.g. leng for beautiful*]

Z: anymore?

K: sing k 都似係hong kong 既娛樂
[*sing k looks like a Hong Kong entertainment*]

Z: aaah fair enough

Z: okay, finally can you do the same to passage 4

K: a 係男
[*a is a guy*]

K: b 係女
[*b is a girl*]

K: 大約 25
[*about 25*]

Z: and where do they come from?

K: 一個係外地
[*one is from abroad*]

- K: 兩個都係hong kong 人
[both of them are hong kong people]
- Z: why do you think they're both HK people?
- K: 都係用既詞語la
[also, it's their use of words]
- K: 同pasage 4 一樣
[it's the same as passage 4]
- K: 3
- Z: can you give me some examples?
- K: 個d 助語詞
[those mood markers]
- K: bor, ma, la
- Z: okok
- Anyway scoring time
- Z: if 1 is complete not hong kong, and 10 is totally Hong Kong
- Z: what score will you give to passage 4? (1-10)?
- K: 6
- Z: why?
- K: 因為唔係太hong kong
[because it's not too hong kong]
- K: passage3 明顯好多
[passage 3 is more obvious]
- Z: hmmm if they're not "too Hong Kong", where else can they come from you reckon?
- K: 正常會諗hk lor
[normally one would think hk]
- K: 無考慮其他地方
[have not considered other places]
- Z: I mean 如果妳覺得佢地唔係好香港人, 佢地可以0黎自乜0野地方呢?
[I mean if you think they are not too Hong Kong, where could they come from?]
- K: 台灣, mainland china
[Taiwan, mainland china]
- Z: big possibility?
- Z: or very possibly that they're from HK?
- K: hk 大機會d
[hk is more possible]

Z: kk

Z: how about passag 4?

Z: passage 3?

Z: what score and why?

K: passage 4 頭先唔係答左咩??
[for passage 4 didn't I answered??]

Z: oh 3 I meant

K: passage3 會俾9
[passage 3 I'll say 9]

Z: why?

K: 因為同我自己同frd 溝通都係咁lor
[because I'm like this when I speak to my friend]

Z: aaah

K: 所以都幾肯定係hk people
[so I'm quite sure it's hk people]

Z: then why not 10?

K: where did the last point go?

K: 咁我都唔知gei.....
[then I can't say I know for definate...]

Z: hahahaha

Z: okok

Z: then how about passage 2?

Z: what score? and why?

K: 7

Z: higher than passage 4?

K: 唔.....
[hmm.....]

K: 你等我諗下先
[let me think about it]

Z: kk

K: 我諗都係5.....因為好多possibility
[I think it's is 5..... because there're many possibilities]

Z: what possibility?

- K: 好似好多國家都會可能
[*It looks like he can possibly from many other countries*]
- K: 無咩特別既人俾我肯定到
[*nothing sure I can get hold of*]
- K: 既野
[*thing*]
- Z: so you think they could be from America, but it is very possible that he is from other countries as well?
- K: yup
- Z: how about passage 1 and why?
- K: 4
- Z: why?
- K: 我一d 都諗唔到係咩人啊
[*I have no idea where he/she comes from*]
- Z: okok
- K: 都係估下
[*I'm just guessing*]
- Z: and do you mind if I ask whether you think passage 2 is more HK than passage 1?
- K: passage 1 講既野好似hk 都類似情況
[*passage 1 seems to be talking about the situation in Hong Kong*]
- Z: but you scored passage 2 higher than passage 1.
- K: So you think passage 2 is more Hong Kong than passage 1?
- Z: 我passage 2 覺得係americian 唔係hk ma
[*I think passage two is American, not hk*]
- K: but you score passage two 5 and passage one 4 bor
- K: passage 1 係hk ma
[*passage 1 is hk*]
- Z: yupyup that's what I mean but you score passage two 5 but passage one 4 bor
- K: 等等先
[*wait*]
- K: scoring 係socre 邊個hk more ma???
[*scoring is to score which one is more hk???*]
- K: 咁我諗錯左lar
[*then I have thought it in a wrong way*]
- Z: yupyup

Z: the more HongKong the higher la hahaha

K: 咁passage 2 應該6 lar
[*then passage 2 should be 6*]

K: passage 1 5 la

Z: then you think passage 2 is as hong kong as passage 4?

Z: Maybe let's do it this way

Z: let's score them all again hahaha

K: passage 2 講打機都好貼近hk
[*passage 2 is about video games so it is close to hk*]

Z: I approximately know what your reasons of scoring them are

Z: but I do need to number for some reference

Z: so maybe you think about them and score them comparing to each other

Z: *by comparing to each other

K: p1 - 5, p2 - 6, p3 - 9, p4 - 7

Z: so you think passage two is more hong kong than passage one?

K: yup

Z: good good

K: so do you write in those styles?

K: Do you write in the style of passage 1 and 2?

Z: 即係點呀??
[*what do you mean?*]

K: emmm

Z: as you can see the writing styles of p1 and p2 is very different from the styles of p3 and p4

K: up

K: yup

Z: am wondering whether do you write in the styles of p3 and p4?

K: 我會呀~
[*I do!*]

Z: in all occasions?

K: 交功課咪會lor
[*when I do my homework*]

Z: p3 and p4???!!!!

K: 同frds 傾計咪用p3, p4 lor
[when I talk to friends then I use p3, p4]

Z: so when handing in homework you use p1 and p2

K: 梗係la
[of course!!]

Z: good good!! that's the end of it thanks a lot for your precious time! any final comment?

K: 好難估 p1 and p2
[it's difficult to guess p1 and p2]

Informant L
Media: ICQ
Text version B

- Z: Hi!
- L: hey
- Z: thanks for doing the interview for me :-) I'm very grateful :-)
- L: dun worry abt it
- Z: have XXXX gave you the passages/
- L: yeah
- L: just now
- L: i'll get back to u rite after i finish reading it
- Z: yup thanks
and meanwhile can you tell me your:

age, gender, education level, and whether you went to an emi or cmi secondary school?
- L: 19, F, college yr 2, emi
- Z: good good thanks :-) take your time and read it very briefly. And tell me when you're done :)
- L: sure
- Z: thanks :-)
- L: im don
- L: e
- Z: good good! before we start, do you understand the passages?
- L: yeah
- Z: all of them?
- L: yep
- Z: good good.
for passage one can you tell me who you think the author is?
- Z: can you tell me his/her gender? age? education level? and where s/he comes from?
- L: sb who's evaluating an online call center
- Z: yuppyup is s/he a man or a woman?
- L: hmmm cant really tell
- L: female if i must pick one

Z: guess? :-) I just need you answering using your impression :)

Z: good good how about age? and education level?

L: age 30ish, and i think she's gone to college

Z: and where do you think she comes from?

L: as in nationality?

L: where she lives?

Z: nationality please :)

Z: helo?

L: chinese?

L: i dunno

Z: why do you think she's chinese?

L: coz i dun think there's the past tense of lead is leaded

L: a native speaker wun make this kind of mistake

Z: okay :-) fair enough. How about passage 2? please tell me, again, the gender, and age, the education level and the nationality of the author?

L: male, 20 ish, college, american

Z: why do you think he's american?

L: quite a bit of american eg

L: like microsoft, xbox

Z: hmmm good good. So how about passage three?
Can you guess the identities of A and B in the passage?

L: arcade games sounds american

Z: again their ages/genders/education leve/ and nationality?

L: 1 sec

Z: take your time :-)

L: identity meaning?

L: their relationship?

Z: their ages/genders/education level/ and nationalities

L: both teenage, girls, secondary school, hong kong definitely

Z: why so definite?

L: coz theyre using chinglish

L: unique culture of hk

Z: can you explain more a bit on chinglish?

L: using english letters to type out cantonese pronunciations

Z: for exmaple?

L: i went to school in chinglish is ngor farn jor hok

Z: good good :D

how about passage 4?

Z: can you do the same to the identities of the A and B?

L: A is a guy, B girl, both working i guess

Z: how about their age and education levels and their nationalities?

L: 20-ish, completed secondary education, HK

Z: again, why do you think they are from Hong Kong?

Z: I mean why do you think they're Hong Kong people?

L: those "la", "ma", "bor"

Z: good good :) scoring time. If 1 is totally not Hong Kong and 10 is totally Hong Kong, what score will you give to passage 4? (1-10)?

L: u mean to the writers?

Z: to the passage themselves. How stylishly Hong Kong you think they are?

L: 7

Z: why?

L: B dun "normal" english mostly in the passage and only "ma" and "bor" once or twice

L: whereas A uses chinglish basically thru out

L: i mean B uses english

Z: good good :-) how about passage 3? what score? and why?

L: 10

Z: why?

L: chinglish thruout for both A and B

Z: and how about passage 2 and, again, why?

L: 1, no grammatical or spelling mistakes wutsoever

L: sounds like a native speaker wrote it

Z: good good and finally passage 1 and why?

L: 6

L: some grammar mistakes and a few phrases just sound weird

L: like at the meanwhile

Z: good observation. so do you ever write in the style of passage 4 or 3?

L: sometimes on msn

Z: and how about the style of 1 or 2?

L: when im doing homework like essays and for times when i dun use chinglish on msn

Z: brilliant!!! thanks so much for your help!! that's the end of the interviews!!! :D

Informant M
Media: MSN Messenger
Text Version A

- Z: please read the 4 passages briefly and then tell me when you're finish pls
- Z: and meanwhile please tell me your age, gender, edu level and whether you went to an EMI or CMI school please :-)
- M: i'm female, 21, uni student, EMI
- Z: Thanks loads. Have you finished reading the passages?
- Z: You only need to read it quite briefly
- M: ok
- Z: brilliant
- M: finish
- Z: good good. Firstly do you understand the passages?
- M: yup
- Z: good good
- M: let's start
- Z: for passage one, can you tell me who you think A and B are?
- M: CMI students in hk!
- Z: hahaha what about their ages?
- Z: genders?
- Z: and edu lev?
- M: they are gals
- M: and F4-5 i guess
- Z: why do you think they're from HK?
- M: becos their english is very chinglish!!
- Z: can you tell me more about chinglish?
- M: hmm.. chinglish means chinese english, it's a kinda english mis-used by local students who are incapable of using standard english (as MSS students do)
- M: wrong grammar, wrong usage...
- Z: can you give me some examples of Chinglish they use in P1?
- M: they just say things as they do in cantonese, just use english words!

M: i go central eat rice

Z: I mean example from passage 1.

M: oh, sorry, i thought it's Primary 1

M: wa..gum mei ho leng law

M: u see, they use ping-yin even la

Z: so is pinyin a kind of chinglish too?

M: yeah

Z: okok

M: also B: waRRRRR~~~~~*****

Z: hahaha how about passage 2?

Z: who do you think the authors (A and B) are?

Z: tell me their ages, genders, and where they come from please

M: they're probably uni-stdeutn

M: one from hk, and the other in a foreign country

Z: so you mean the other is a native speaker of English?

M: no no both hk cantonese speaker

Z: how about their genders?

M: males

Z: and why do you think they're from HK?

M: soorry hold on pls very quickly

Z: kk take your time

M: is talking to XXXX on phone now sorry

Z: oh that's okay.

M: will get back to u v soon

Z: kk

M: am ok la

M: they're from hk becos they speak in chinglish

Z: which parts of their speech are chinglish can you tell me?

Z: yay thanks for coming back btw

M: B: Oh haha I've just woken up la

M: actually all those end-words like "la" "le"

M: oh I know you won't la hahahahahahaha

Z: how about passage 3?

Z: can you tell me about the author as well?

M: a pretend-to-be-good english writer

M: quite a number of grammatical mistakes bor

Z: tell me his/her gender, age, edu level and where s/he comes from?

M: male, F7 to Uni

M: HBC (not hsb, but hong kong born chinese)

Z: hahahaha why do you think he's from HK?

M: dunno, gut feeling

M: becos native speaker won't hv such mistake

Z: aaah could he come from other places?

M: must been HK!!

M: must be sorry

Z: why are you so sure?

M: "at the meanwhile, " wor..

M: can believe BBC or ABC will say so

Z: so only Hong Kong people can write such things?

Z: can he not be malaysian?

M: maybe other Chinese ppl la

Z: singaporian?

Z: indonesian?

M: i dunno, i only made friends with native English and Cantonese speakers

Z: aaah

Z: but you're sure he's not a native speaker of English?

M: sure that he ISN'T!!!

Z: how about passage 4?

M: a native speaker

Z: can you tell me again who the author is?

Z: his/her age, gender, nationality, education level?

M: male, uni, from an English-speaking country

M: or a very well-educated EMI students like MSS gals

Z: hahahahaha

Z: do you think he's a native speaker of English?

M: well, maybe and maybe not hahaha, u kw, MSS gals speak like a native speaker, so it's very easy to confuse ppl

Z: so if you have to guess, which country do you think he comes from?

M: UK or USA

Z: kk

Z: good good

Z: scoring time

M: hey, u score me? must be native speaker la

Z: if 1 is completely not hong kong, and 10 is totally Hong Kong, what score will you give P1 judging it by its style?

M: 9

Z: why?

M: chinglish wor.

M: nearly no standard english at all

Z: and how about P2?

M: 5

Z: why?

M: can be singaporean

M: but quite obvious still hk

Z: okok P3?

Z: n why?

M: 3

Z: why?

M: closely resemble (sub)standard english

Z: what do you mean by (sub)standard?

M: it carries some features of standard english, ie english as is practised in US, UK and other English-speaking countries. but it's not perfect in that it contains lots of grammatical mistake

M: s

Z: but you reckon P3 is not very Hong Kong even if it is of a substandard of English?

M: it's from hk, but can't say it's very hk

M: dunno, so just pick 3

Z: kk

Z: how about P4?

M: 1

Z: why?

M: must be written by native speakers

Z: hahaha okay so not Hong Kong at all for P4?

M: not so la

Z: and do you write in the styles of 1 and 2?

M: hmm, officially no, but sometimes did

M: mainly use P2

M: but in rare cases of difficult words (very rarely given my gd ability to use english) may use P1

Z: yupyup

Z: and how about the styles of 3 and 4?

Z: do you write in such styles?

M: i write in 4 style

M: but not 3

Z: why not P3?

M: cos i got A in english (HKCEE) and Use of English (HKALE)

M: i dun commit grammatical mistakes, sorry

Z: hahahahaha good good!

Z: That's the end of it!

Informant N
Media: MSN Messenger
Text version B

- N: hey hey.....i am ready la
- Z: good good let me send you the passages for reading
- N: do u need to record any voice?
- Z: No I don't
- Z: But I'll need to log the chat
- N: okok.....not a problem, so i should write in formal english?
- Z: No you don't need to haha
- Z: just write in whichever way you want to la
- Z: It's not a difficult task
- Z: all you have to do is to read the four passages briefly
- Z: and answer my questions
- N: okok.....i should read it and let u know when i am done?
- Z: just read it briefly will be fine ga la
- Z: yup
- N: okok.....i am a slower reader though
- Z: and meanwhile please tell me your age
- Z: edu level and whether you went to an EMI or CMI secondary school
- N: Age: 24
- N: Edu Level: entering 2nd Ph.D.
- Z: EMI= english??
- Z: yup
- N: i am 2nd year
- N: ok.....i went to EMI secondary school
- Z: good good. please read the passages briefly
- Z: shall I give you 5 mins?
- N: do u have to count the time I take?
- Z: No I don't, but generally you only need to read it briefly

Z: thanks so much lei. please tell me when you're done

N: icic.....i am reading the second passage already.....i guess 5 mins is ok

Z: kk please tell me when you're done

N: okok.....on page 5....so funny

N: no la.....i am done

N: i have finished reading all six pages

Z: good good

Z: first of all, do you understand the passages? I mean is there anything you find difficulties reading?

N: not really

Z: good good

Z: first passage one

Z: for passage one *

N: ok

Z: can you tell me who is author could be? Please describe the author

N: can i refer to the passage?

Z: what you mean?

N: do I have to refer to the passage to confirm myself or I should close the document when I answer your questions?

Z: Ohoh sorry hahaha you can read the passages when you're answering

N: also, what do you want me to describe? writing style or what kind of person i think the author is?

N: ok

Z: yup just from reading the psg, tell me who you think the author could be

Z: you can describe different aspects of it

N: ok

N: i guess the author is some kind of an analyst writing a report of the online retailer for magazines or something like that

Z: good good, do you think s/he is a guy or a gal?

N: this is a guy

Z: how old you think he is?

N: i guess around 30

Z: what is his education level?

N: at least with a bachelor degree

Z: and where do you think he comes from?

N: um.....probably he is from an English speaking country.....I mean he does not necessary be a native English speaker, but at least he can speak and write fluent english

Z: if you had to pin point his origin, where do you think he's from?

N: you know, i am kind of melt into their writing (i don't mean i can write at their level), but i have been intensively reading this kind of writing level, i have seen chinese writing this kind of english too

N: i would say.....US

Z: and do you reckon he's a native speaker?

N: i think so

Z: good good

N: ok

Z: why would you make this guess?

N: The writing style does not like what we usually see in HK or writings by HK authors. Also, the English is quite fluent. Anyhow, the writing style is the key thing that I think lead me to such a guess

Z: good good, how about passage two?

Z: can you describe the author again?

N: I think the author is like writing a paragraph for a game book.....you know, those PC and Viedo games magazine

N: video

Z: and, again, do you think s/he is a guy or a gal?

Z: how old?

Z: his/her edu lev?

Z: and where does s/he comes from?

N: twenty something, also he is a "gamer"

N: it is a guy with a bachelor degree in computer related studies and comes from the States

Z: why do you think he's American?

Z: Simply because he is talking a lot about video games originated in the States

Z: you reckon he's a native speaker of English?

N: I guess he is a native speaker

Z: good good, and let's go to Psg3. Can you tell me about A and B?

Z: Who do you think A and B are?

N: Obviously, A is in UK, while B is in HK. Well, both are HK people

Z: and their ages/genders/edu levels?

N: I guess A is studying in UK for a bachelor, while B is studying in HK

N: I think they are around their early 20s

N: I am not too sure.....I guess both are gals

Z: good good. Why are you so sure that they're HK People?

N: they are talking in Chinglish

Z: can you elaborate on Chinglish? What do you mean by Chinglish?

N: also, they are using abbreviations that we HK ppl use

N: It is an unique style that people in Hong Kong use when speaking english. We add a lot of Chinese experssions that even don't ever exist in English when we talk and write, such as jar, lor etc

Z: yupyup and what abbreviations you can see in the passage that are only used by HK people?

N: u.....chiense ping yin....db....k...ur

Z: where's that Chinese ping yin?

N: There are many. Do I have to name all?

Z: Oh nono hahah just give me one or two examples

N: "wa..gum mei ho leng law"...."hai ar"

Z: good good. Then finally how about passage 4?

Z: can you tell me about A and B again?

N: Both are HK people, guys, twenty something, undegraduate students. It seems like both of them are having their study outside HK, as they write with more formal English instances

N: btw, A is like your writing style

Z: really? hahahahaha

Z: and please tell me why, again, you're so sure they're HK People?

N: yeah....you use "loads" a lot

Z: Hahahahahahahahahahaha

Z: (will tell you after the interview who they are)

N: Again, they are using Chinese expressions that HK ppl use

Z: for example?

Z: give me some examples pls?

N: "le" "ma"

N: also, there are abbreviations that we always use, such as "gd," "cos," and "dunno."

Z: good good. Scoring time.

If 1 is completely not Hong Kong, and 10 is totally Hong Kong. What score will you give to passage one and why?

Z: (1-10)

N: 1 for Passage 1, sicne the author is writing in fluent English adn the writing style is so not HK ppl like

Z: good good how about 2?

N: P2 i mean, and why?

N: 5 for P2. The writing style and the use of English is quite simple. A fluent English writer in HK can write at that level

Z: good good, P3? And, again, why??

N: P3 is 10. There is no doubt in giving it a 10 since the passage uses a lot of Chiense expressions and ping yin as well

Z: and finally P4 and why>?

N: P4 is 9. As oppose to 10, I only rate it a 9 because the two people here are writing with more formal English, but still, it is quite HK style's English

Z: so do you reckon the more formal the English is, the less Hong Kong it is?

N: Well, there is a bias in terms of the passages themselves. The first two are formal writing, while the last two are excerpt of a conversation. We do expect people to be less formal in conversing. So, it may not be completely correct to say "the more formal the English is, the less Hogn Kong it is."

N: I would not give this comment until I have seen these four soruces: A and B in P3 and A and B in P4 until I have seen them write a passage like the first two sampels

Z: hmmm fair enough. And finally, do you write in the styles of P1 and P2?

N: samples

N: I guess my writing is at P2 level, though I am very eager to write like P1

Z: so you do write in such styles?

N: when I am writing my paper, I guess I am writing in between P2 and P1 (I am in between coz my

mentor force me to). If it is like a email between colleagues and professors, i would write in P2 level. But, if I am in a conversation, i will be very likely writing in P3 and P4 styles

Z: what do you mean by writing conversation? Do you mean on MSN/ICQ?

N: yup yup, and of coz, the person that I am having conversation with must be a HK ppl

Z: brilliant! Any final comments on the passages?

N: well.....i don't like the writing style of P1 completely, though I think P1 writes with the best english. I think the sentences are too long. It is also the styles that I can see that native speaker loves to do.

N: P2 is very report like.....very simple

N: P3 and 4 are conversation type. There isn't much writing style. But at least, the way that these four ppl write can tell where do they have their edu.

Z: good good! That's the end of the interview!! thanks so much for your time lei

Z: let me log it into the doc.

Informant O
Media: MSN Messenger
Text Version B

- O: we talk here is better
- Z: I'm doing to a survey and need some online interviews. Can you spare me 30mins, today or tomorrow :)
- O: today is ok
- Z: I'll send you a doc.
- O: ok
- Z: you read the passages briefly and answer my questions online, if it is okay? :)
- O: ys
- Z: shall I give you 5 mins to read it?
- O: ys
- Z: just read it briefly it will be okay.
- O: sorry I can't open the file ar
- Z: Oh can't you not?
- O: I think my pc got some problem
- Z: Let me send you it in txt.
- O: ok
- O: finish
- Z: brilliant!
- Z: For passage one, who do you think the writer is.
- Z: please describe the writer :D
- O: he is someone who are studying business
- O: and I think he is the writer of some business text book
- Z: good good, how old do you think he is? Is s/he a male or female?
- O: male....36
- Z: where do you think he comes from?
- O: America
- Z: why do you think he's from america?

O: feel

Z: good good, HOw about passage two, pls describe the writer!

O: he also business people

Z: how old? male/female? Edu level? Where does s/he come from?

O: male

O: master

O: also USA

Z: good good how about passage 3?

O: writer?

Z: A and B this time :)

O: I don't understand wt you want to ask

Z: please describe the background of A and B? :D

O: a: study in UK adn he is HK people

O: B: in HK NOW a n d fd with A

Z: And where do they come from? How old will they be? Are they guys or gals or one guy one gal?

O: boy

O: THEY both come from HK

Z: how old could they be?

O: teenage

Z: why do you think they're from Hong Kong?

O: sing K , shopping..and because your sister b4 also want to come back to cut her hair

Z: so by the content?

Z: you think they're from Hong Kong?

O: ys

Z: good good, and finally how about passage 4?

Z: please do the same to A and B this time

O: A: in Hk

O: B : oversea

O: but they both Hk people too

Z: why do you think they're HK people?

O: their tone

Z: what do you mean by "tone"?

O: like they always using the HK tone

O: 1

O: don't know how to say\

Z: that's okay. okay this time, for passage 4, if you score it (1-10, 1 being not HK at all, and 10 being totally HK), how will you score?

O: 8

Z: why?

O: because their tone is very HK

Z: good good, how about passage 3? and why?

O: 10

Z: they know that the habit of HK people

O: like sing K shopping

O: and one of his want to back to HK to cut his hair

Z: hahahahaha good good

Z: how about passage 2 and why?

O: 5

O: american people always writing this kind of article

Z: aaah and finally, passage 1?

Z: and why?

O: because my text book article are similar

O: 8

Z: do you think it is written by Hong Kong people more than westerners

O: no

Z: aah good good. finally do you write in the style of 3 and 4?

O: yes

Z: in which occasion you use it?

O: msn and icq

Z: how about passage one and two

O: no

Z: why??

O: I d o n 't like formal style

Z: aah good good!! So that's the end of the survey thanks so much! bY THE WAY you are 20 female? What's your education level?
and did you do to English medium school/chinese medium school?

O: associate degree

Z: emi sec sch

Z: good good!! THanks so much for your help!!

O: welcome

Informant P
Media: MSN Messenger
Text version A

- Z: let me send you the passages
- Z: shall I give you 5 mins to take a look at the passages?
- P: yes pls
- Z: thanks thanks
- Z: And meanwhile, can you tell me your age, education level, and whether you went to an English medium school or chinese medium school when you were in secondary school?
- P: 21,2nd year in uni,eng
- Z: good good pls tell mewhen you've finished
- P: finished
- Z: good good
- Z: First of all, do you understand the passages?
- P: can't really understand the 3rd one
- Z: which bits of it do you not understand?
- P: mm..
- P: don't understand the vocap
- P: hard to tell~but just don't understand
- Z: That's okay
- Z: okok let's get into the questions
- Z: for passage 1 (P1), can you tell me who you think A and B are?
- Z: can you describe A and B?
- P: two friends lor
- Z: do you think they're guys or gals?
- P: girls
- Z: how old do you think they're ?
- P: 16--20
- Z: and where do you think they come from?
- P: Hong Kong
- Z: why do you think they're from HK?

P: 因為佢0也打英文好廣東話音
[*because their English is very Cantonese tonally*]

P: can u read chinese?

Z: yup I read chinese

Z: you can answer me in Chinese too

Z: good good.

Z: How about passage two?

Z: can you tell me about A and B again?

P: a男b女
[*a boy b girl*]

P: 都係香港人
[*both are Hong Kong People*]

Z: again, why do you think they're from HK lei?

P: 因為講野有la
[*because what they say has "la"*]

Z: anything more?

P: 仲有ma 呀bor呀
[*also "ma", "bor"*]

Z: kk

Z: let's move on to passage 3

Z: can you tell me about the author this time?

Z: who do you think the author is?

P: 什麼business tutor
[*some kind of business tutor*]

Z: where do you think he comes from?

Z: he or she?

P: eng or 美
[*eng or American*]

P: HE

Z: why do you think he's from the UK or the US?

P: 唔知呀覺得囉
[*I don't know I just feel so*]

Z: kk and how about passage 4?

Z: who do you think the author comes from?

Z: where do you think the author comes from?

P: eng

Z: the UK?

Z: any reason?

P: 唔知~一睇就覺得
[*I don't know~ I felt so when I first looked at it*]

Z: hahahahaha okay scoring time.

Z: If 1 is totally not Hong Kong, and 10 is completely Hong Kong, what score, from 1 - 10, will you give to passage one?

P: 10係乜呀
[*what is 10~*]

P: 呀明
[*ah! I understand now*]

P: 10

Z: good good

Z: and how about passage 2?

Z: what score? and why?

P: 8~因為佢0的英文咁太太太係咁la lor呀
[*8~ because their English has too to too many "la" "lor" and etc.*]

Z: hahahaha okay how about passage 3? and why?

P: 35~雖然係寫得好咩野,不過香港人一樣可以寫到0的咁0既野呀
[*35~ although it looks like something, Hong Kong People can write something like that*]

Z: 3 to 5... hmm... so I'll make it a 4 in this case

HOw about passage 4? and why?

P: nono我係只5
[*nono I mean 5*]

Z: Oh good good

P: 4呀都係5
[*4 is also 5*]

P: reason一樣
[*for the same reason*]

Z: good good

And for the style of passage 1 and 2, do you write in these kinds of styles?

P: 比較少
[*comparatively rare*]

Z: why?

P: 因為我都打中文
[*because I type in Chinese*]

Z: aaah if you wrote in this style where do you write?

P: msn

Z: and how about the styles of 3 and 4?

Z: do you write in such styles? And in which occasions?

P: 交功課essay
[*when I need to hand in my homework or essay*]

Z: so you do write in such styles? Which of the styles you tend to write when doing essays? 3 or 4?

P: 4~我英文有限公司3寫唔到
[*4~ my English is limited so I can't write 3*]

Z: so you think the style of 3 is more advanced than the style of 4?

P: 因為0的vocab難
[*because the vocab is difficult*]

Z: aaaah

Z: okok

Z: I get it now that's the end of the interview thanks so much!

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